The National Future Farmer

Published by the Future Farmers of America

April-May, 1985

Inside This Issue: Profiles in FFA Leadership
Star Farmers: Telling It Like It Is

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The National
Future Farmer
Published by the Future Farmers of America

April-May, 1985
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A Word With The Editor

We must learn to live with change. All about us, every day, things are changing. Nowhere are these changes occurring more frequently than in agriculture.

One change taking place that has some people worried is the number of bright, promising students who are leaving agriculture. Some have called this "talent erosion."

It has been reported, for example, that since 1980, enrollment in U.S. ag college programs have dropped by about 20 percent. During this same period, enrollment in high school vocational agriculture and the FFA has fallen by over 50,000 students nationwide.

If this trend continues, America is in danger of losing its position as the world's greatest producer.

A made-for-television special entitled "Agriculture's Next Generation: A Conflict of Interest," addresses the problem. The show is narrated by Eddie Albert. Others appearing in the feature include Senator Robert Dole of Kansas; Dr. Charles Benbrook, National Academy of Sciences; Dr. Duane Acker, president of Kansas State University; Dr. Russell Mawby, chairman of the Kellogg Foundation; and Dr. Larry Case, national FFA advisor and senior program officer for vocational education in agriculture in the U.S. Department of Education.

The national FFA organization commissioned the program which was aired over 120 television stations nationwide by four sponsors: Monsanto, Yamaha, DuPont Company and Ford Tractor.

Because of limited advertising money, it was not possible to cover the entire United States. However, if your station would be willing to air the show free as a public service, or can get local advertising support, you can get a tape of the show at cost which is approximately $75 to $100. Contact Cameron Dubes at the National FFA Center (703) 360-3600.

Wilson Carnes

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1985 Farm Bill
Here's a brief overview of this year's farm bill debate. **10**

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"Good Enough" Just Doesn't Cut It
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Pete Mercer lives on a corporate farm where diversity is the key. **18**

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Whether it's producing livestock or leadership, Cindy Blair loves both. **20**

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This national public speaking winner makes an impact with FFA'ers. **23**

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This FFA chapter is growing by meeting the needs of its community. **26**

These Ag Computer Winners Develop New Tools for Farm Profits
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Sizing Up Used Machinery
For beginning farmers, tips for buying sound used equipment. **30**

A Night At The FFA Banquet
Our own Alex Curtright takes us on an amusing but valuable adventure. **40**

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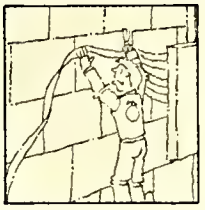

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The Cover: *Cover Photo by Michael Wilson*
Tony Edmond, of Dublin, Georgia, uses this biltmore stick to measure board footage, height, volume and stand of trees at his FFA chapter's forestry plot. Tony's story begins on page 23.

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The FFA
News in Brief

Get Ready For WCP

The Washington Conference Program (WCP) is now accepting applications from FFA members interested in attending the 1985 conferences, to be held in Washington, D.C. this summer. Eight week-long seminars in leadership training are scheduled for this year's program, beginning June 17 and ending August 3, 1985. The registration fee is $310 per student and $235 per advisor. Conference Directors Bruce Kettler and Perry Storms will head up a team of talented staff counselors. For more details, scan the brochure mailed to your FFA chapter in March; a detailed program will be mailed this month.

Vo-Ag Leaders Meet

The National FFA Board of Directors met at the National FFA Center in Alexandria, Virginia, to make some far-reaching decisions which will impact heavily on the organization. Here are a few highlights bound to affect members and instructors most:

• COMPUTER SERVICE—The board recommended a six-month design and field test "to determine the feasibility of and design for a proposed National FFA Agricultural Computer Service," which would provide software information, reviews, discount software sales, and a software "library" for vo-ag instructors who wish to preview materials needed for their classrooms. The board will decide whether or not to implement the program in July after project results have been studied. The FFA Foundation Board of Trustees approved a $12,500 grant to fund the study.

• NATIONAL OFFICER GRANTS—The board approved increasing the national officer financial grants (previously called scholarships) from $2,000 to $4,000 for each officer upon completing their year of service.

• SPONSOR AWARENESS PROGRAM—The board approved a plan to encourage each FFA chapter to write letters of appreciation to at least ten FFA Foundation Sponsors, school and state administrators, for supporting vocational agriculture. The plan is currently being tested.

Vo-Ag Study

The National Academy of Sciences will attempt to define key issues and challenges as it launches a new study of vocational agriculture education, according to Dr. Phil Ross, executive-secretary of the Academy's Board of Agriculture. The study will lean heavily on a committee of 15 or more experts in the field, including FFA members, staff, vo-ag instructors and local school superintendents. The goal: to identify problems and possible solutions for vocational agriculture education. The study, which has been endorsed by Secretary of Agriculture John Block and former Secretary of Education Terrell Bell, is scheduled to conclude within a year, at a cost of $300,000.

National Staff Changes

Responsibility for the FFA Calendar Program and FFA in-house Printing Services has been transferred to the FFA Supply Service Division to make room for expanded computer communications activities in the national organization's Publications Division. Jack Pitzer, Senior Editor for *The National FUTURE FARMER* magazine, has been assigned to oversee FFA News and Information on the Ag Ed Network, FFA's nationwide computer network. Mr. Pitzer will continue his duties with the *BETWEEN ISSUES* newsletter and *The National FUTURE FARMER*.

New FFA Alumni Manual

Need information on organizing an FFA Alumni Affiliate? You can find out step by step when you read the *FFA Alumni Manual*, recently published by the national FFA Alumni Association. The manual also includes information on membership, dues, suggested activities, award programs and tax-exemptions. It's available now through the FFA Supply Service, for $3.25. Printing and production costs for the manual were picked up by Merck Company Foundation, as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, Inc.

FFA Alumni Manual

HOW TO TELL IF YOU'RE WEARING THE BEST SHANTUNG STRAW HAT.

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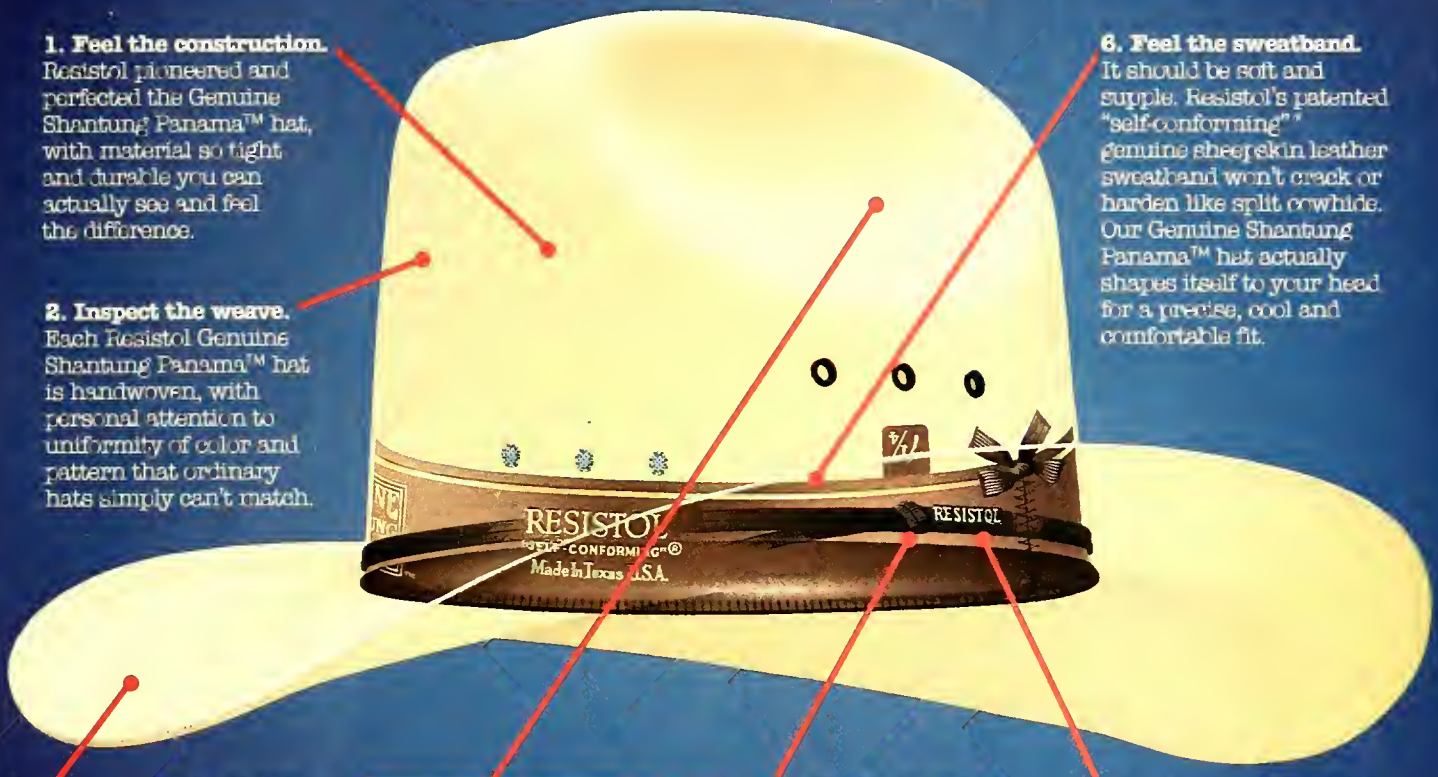

3. Examine the finish. The exclusive Resistol Vinylcote finish is applied by hand to each hat. Unlike a thin surface film, Resistol's protective penetrating formula saturates the fiber to shed dirt and water for a much longer life and better look.

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Then you'll put your skill to good use one weekend a month at a Reserve center close to home. All the while, you'll be earning a good salary.

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The Mailbag

Keep Vo-ag Growing

In your February-March issue you published an article "Cancelled Until Further Notice." It tells about how vocational agriculture classes are being dropped all over the nation due to budget cuts.

Vocational agriculture teaches valuable qualities which include leadership, citizenship, cooperation, record keeping and many others. I believe that agriculture is just as important as science, math and language.

Joe Schilling
Largo, Florida

I am writing in response to the article "Cancelled Until Further Notice." This article was worth the effort it took to write it. If people are aware of the problem, they can try to solve it before it begins and keep the program alive and growing.

Annette Clark
Mount Pleasant, Michigan

Word Distinction

I enjoyed reading the article "New Crop Technologies: How High Can We Go" (February-March, 1985). However, as an agricultural engineer and member of the National Society of Professional Engineers, I wish to call attention to your use of the term "genetic engineering." While the use of this term is widespread, it is not appropriate. There is a clear distinction between an engineer and a geneticist. It may be too late to prevent the term "genetic engineering" from being used, but at least let it be known that agricultural engineering is something very different.

Mark Steven Byerly
Harrisonburg, Virginia

Jacket History

In the February-March issue I read "The Story of the FFA Jacket." I had often wondered where, when, how and why the FFA jacket originated and now my questions have been answered.

Tikeyta Lankford
LeFlore, Oklahoma

I really enjoyed the article on the FFA jacket. We even went as far as to include part of it in our agribusinessmen's breakfast during which we have our Greenhand ceremony. We thought the story would give the Greenhands a better appreciation of the jacket and the businessmen an explanation of why the official FFA jacket is so important to members.

Mindy Gardner
Kingwood, Texas

I enjoyed reading about the beginning of the FFA jacket in the February-March issue.

Jeremy Baker
St. Joe, Arkansas

(Continued on Page 8)

SKILL BUILDER — The way to taking your best shot!

Learning to shoot is a serious responsibility. It requires a level head, good instruction and a firearm that is manageable and comfortable for you to handle. When you're ready for the shooting sports, you're ready to think about owning a MOSSBERG. We've put a lot of thought into building a firearm to help you perfect your shooting skills.

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— The short 13" buttstock lets you shoulder the firearm without stretching — you can reach the trigger and still keep your head down.

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— The chamber can handle both 2¾" and 3" shells. Load it as single-shot or load the magazine to make it a 5-shot repeater.

— Safety — at the top rear of the receiver, "right under your thumb". The safety button is easily operated (left- or right-hand) and more quickly seen than those on the trigger guard.

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Start with a skill builder and stay with it — taking your best shot is easier with a firearm that will become a partner for the shooting sports.

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Safe[illegible]arms handling is every shooter's responsibility. Treat all firearms as if they are loaded. Load live rounds only when ready to fire at a known, safe target.

Mailbag

(Continued from page 7)

Need Help?

I am a junior at Hunter College High School. Next year I will be in an Inter-College-Year (ICY) program. This is basically a year to do work that I am interested in learning about while taking two or more college-credit courses. I am interested in a farming job and if you could help me, I would greatly appreciate some advice.

What I would really like to do next year is to work on a farm, or in a farm training, hands-on kind of program in the area of Montana, North and South Dakota and Minnesota.

I am interested in small scale, multi-crop farming and dairy work, but my only real requirements are to be able to work outdoors, learn about what day-to-day farming is really like and also be able to get to a college or high school. I don't mind working hard and I have some experience. Preferably, I'd like to earn food and board.

Zoe Neaderland
800 West End Avenue
New York, NY 10025

WEA Enthusiasm

I read the February-March issue with interest. One particular article caught my attention, "Life in America." Along with my FFA activities, I am also a third-year French student. As I graduate this year I leave behind some very adept younger friends in the FFA chapter. I would like to see some of these people in the WEA program.

Amanda Byrom
Randle, Washington

Compliments

As a past FFA member and present alumni member I relish this outstanding, motivational magazine every time it comes. The magazine helps us realize the unlimited opportunities to build on for our future.

Roland Fisher
Covington, Ohio

Featured Farmers

We would like to thank you for the article you wrote about us ("The Farming Fever," December-January, 1984-85). Our families have really enjoyed the article. I think it took the article to make them realize that not everyone has done what we have. We have received letters from younger FFA members telling us that starting out small is the way to go.

Todd and Rebecca Mitchell
Burr Oak, Michigan

Continue subscription

I'm now in the Rosen Wald FFA Chapter which I will be leaving in May, 1985. I have now received the FFA magazine for four years and would like to continue. I really enjoy reading them because they are helpful to me.

Kendall Gibson
Morganza, Louisiana

Good Publicity

Thank you for publishing my joke. It is the second joke I've had published in the magazine. It is a real honor since friends all over the United States see my name in such a prestigious magazine. They write and say, "Wow, Mary Ann, you got your name in *The National FUTURE FARMER*. That's terrific!"

Mary Ann Waldhauser
Loyal, Wisconsin

Convention coverage

I am very proud to be in the North Vernon Chapter here in Indiana.

This is my second year of ag and being in FFA and I really like it. I went to the 57th National Convention in Kansas City and I couldn't begin to tell my parents everything that happened, so when my mom saw my FFA magazine with the information about the convention she really liked it.

Robin Evans
North Vernon, Indiana

Send letters or notes with name, address and chapter to: MAILBAG, The National FUTURE FARMER, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309. All letters are subject to editing.

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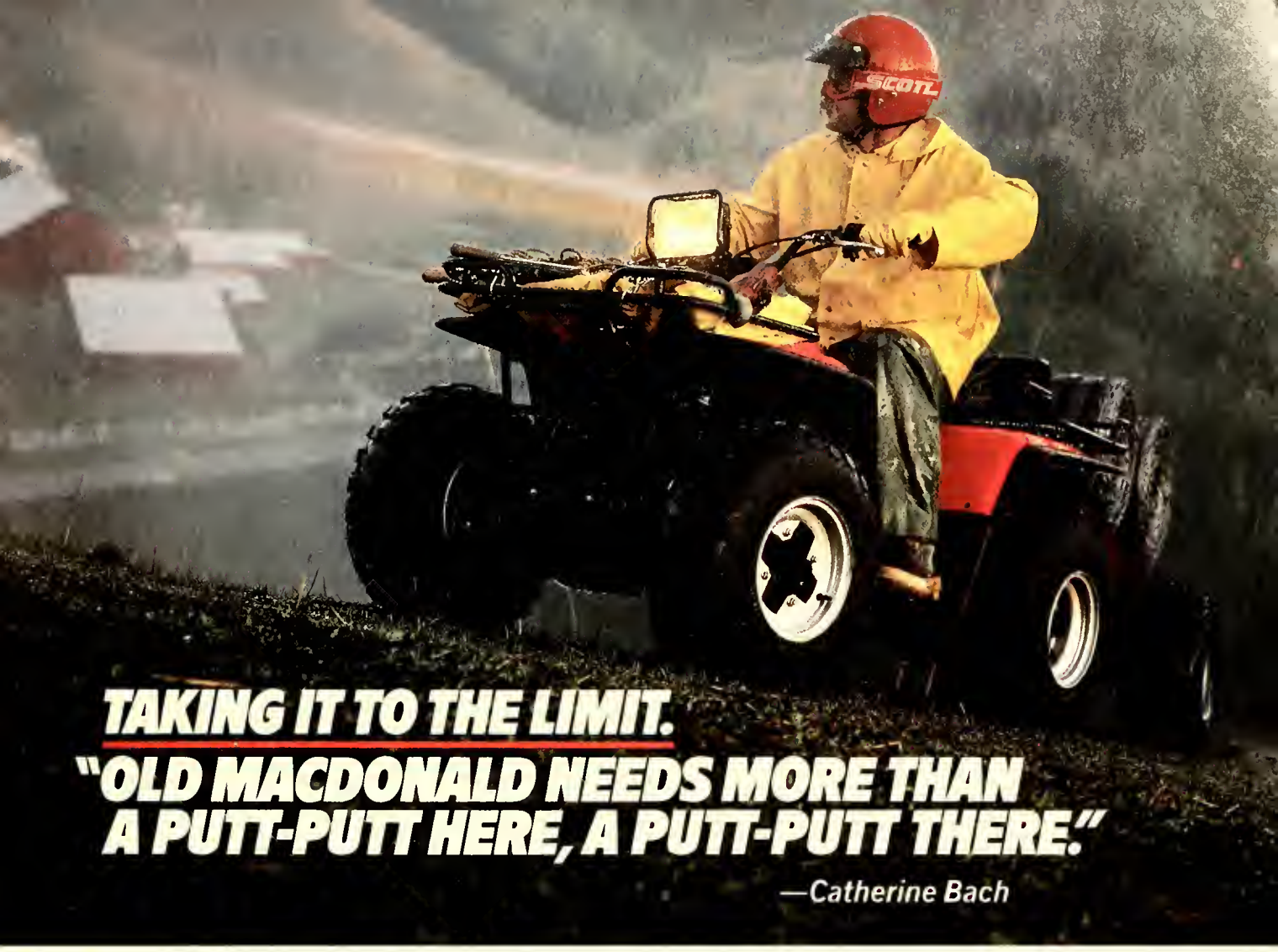

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Complete rules are available from State and National FFA offices or by writing Hesston Corporation. A formal entry form is not required.

1. Entrants must be bonafide members of the FFA who are in good standing. Each member may submit one entry.
2. In 100 words or less, write a message about agriculture and how you feel about farming or ranching life.
3. Entries must conform to the rules of the contest, with the date submitted, name, age, address, phone number of the entrant, FFA Chapter legibly written, and word count of your "Salute."
4. Entries will be judged upon their content, which should be original in nature.
5. All entries become the property of Hesston Corporation.
6. Entries will be judged by a panel of agri-industry executives selected by Hesston Corporation. Judges' decisions are final and not subject to appeal.
7. Entries must be postmarked by Sept. 30, 1985 and mailed to "Salute," Hesston Corporation, Box 4000, Hesston, Kansas 67062

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What FFA Members Should Know About

The 1985

By John Dutcher

AMERICAN agriculture is at war with itself.

The battle over the 1985 Farm Bill, which includes just about everyone in the industry, resembles a civil war. Unlike most civil wars, however, there is no one issue or idea which sums up each side. Instead, industry and government are battling for a farm bill to change the face of agriculture, a face which has become blemished over the years by the over-application of expensive government farm programs.

Farm programs are, quite simply, pieces of legislation to regulate a particular facet of agriculture, control pricing of commodities, or limit production of certain ag products. All the pieces of legislation, collectively, make up a farm bill, which is voted on by Congress and signed into law by the president. In the past, most farm bills were written to last four years. The 1985 Farm Bill is designed to last 15 years, according to the USDA.

At one time, four years was about right for a farm bill. When markets were good, the federal government passed legislation to limit production and increase the prices farmers received for their products, often in the name of protecting soil and water resources.

Now, experts say our farm policy has caused those markets to go sour. Although farm programs do prevent some erosion of American soil, they are blamed for eroding U.S. agricultural markets abroad.

"For every acre we take out of production in this country, we start another acre

Richard W. Goldberg, of USDA: "We need to enter the real world market."

Farm Bill

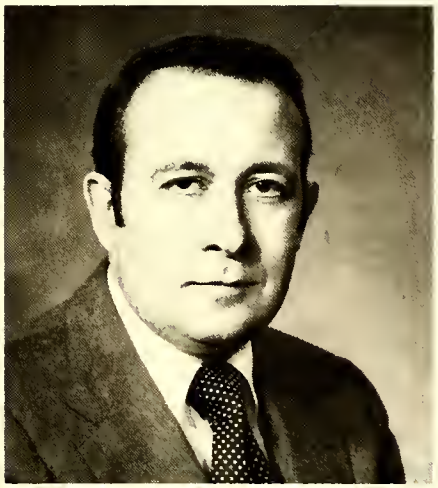
of production overseas," says Richard W. Goldberg, deputy under secretary of Agriculture for International Affairs and Commodity Programs, USDA. Goldberg says an "outdated" farm policy which controls production is just one reason why the United States has lost its competitive edge in world markets. He also cites a strong U.S. dollar; the high U.S. budget deficit, keeping interest rates high; target prices for U.S. commodities; and foreign investment.

Actually, the current farm program can be blamed for at least one of those problems: a high U.S. budget deficit. In 1974 farm programs cost the federal government $12.7 billion. The 1981 Farm Bill had a price tag of $63 billion, Goldberg says. According to Don Paarlberg, a Purdue University professor, cost of 1983 commodity programs alone reached $21.7 billion, greatly exceeding the net farm income of $16 billion.

These are some of the reasons those at work on the 1985 farm bill have looked not only for ways to improve agriculture, but also make it less of a burden on the taxpayer as well.

A Free-market Approach

"What we sincerely need is farm legislation that is sturdy enough to stand up to the inherent volatility and uncertainty in agriculture — yet, flexible enough to stay with a rapidly changing agriculture," Secretary of Agriculture John Block told a group of analysts at an annual USDA conference. Mr. Block outlined five goals the USDA hopes to achieve with this year's bill:



Paul Weller: "This is going to be the bloodiest battle over farm policy in our lifetime."

- Long-term design. With a 15-year farm bill, farmers will be able to make long-term decisions without worrying that government policy will change directions four years down the road.
- Programs that are market-oriented. This would make the price of agricultural commodities determined by the world market, not the federal government.
- Consistency. This will insure that programs designed to help one commodity or aspect of agriculture don't hurt others. It will also make sure U.S. farm policy is consistent with international trade policies and programs.
- Orderly transition for all commodity programs. Through the next five years, the bill would ease out of some commodity programs and into others so producers don't get the rug pulled out from under them.
- Equity. At the end of the transition period, producers in commodity programs will be dealt with fairly.

Although most agree that letting the free market establish prices for agricultural products is good, many facets of agriculture that have price supports for their commodites are worried about Mr. Block's "transition" and what it will do to their businesses.

"We need to enter the real world market," says Goldberg. "U.S. farm policy has tried to create its own market and has expected the world to come here to shop. Our prices are too high and they haven't."

Prices are the things most commodity groups and associations are worried about right now. Many fear producers won't survive the transition to the new farm bill Secretary Block is proposing. Because of this, groups are spending lots of money on lobbying efforts in Washington, to make sure their interests are protected. Many fear that it will result in a farm bill that tries to be all things to everyone and ends up providing few benefits at all.

"Interest in agricultural policy has reached a fever pitch," says Paul Weller, a Washington-based agricultural public affairs veteran. "This is going to be the bloodiest battle over farm policy in our lifetime."

It may be a long, hot summer in Washington, as Congress debates the pros and cons of different programs in the bill. No one seems to be willing to venture a guess as to when the bill will be ready for the president to sign. It's just wait and see — and hope. •••

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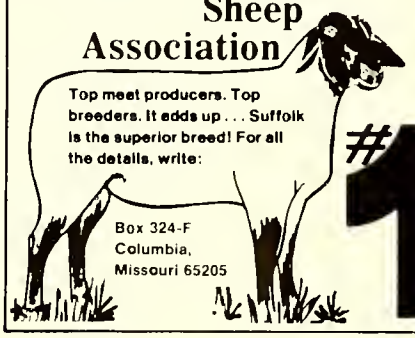

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Looking Ahead

Ridge Till Works

At one time, ridge-till methods for growing crops were considered a bad choice due to low yields and poor weed control. But recent statistics show ridge till can hold its own in both these areas—and may be more efficient and economical than conventional till methods. A University of Minnesota study compared conventional tillage, chisel-reduced tillage and ridge-till and found each method produced about the same level of corn and soybean yield over a multiple year average. Many ridge-till farmers says weed control is no problem either, because the undisturbed soil between rows combines with previous crop residue to snuff out weeds. Other university studies show ridge-till methods were no different than conventional tillage programs in insect damage.

Environment Affects E.T. Success

Controlling the social and environmental factors surrounding a donor cow can double or triple the number of healthy embryos available for embryo transfers, according to two Kansas State University veterinarians. "We urge farmers to allow no changes in the cow's environment—no new pen-mates, none removed, no pen changes," says Dr. David Carnahan, one of two founders of the KSU embryo transfer program. "Nothing is done which might stress the donor cow." Apparently the idea works—national average for successful embryo transfers is four healthy transferrable embryos per cow, but the KSU average over the past year has been 6.5.

Illegal Aliens: Farm Workers, Too

"Illegal aliens," or "undocumented workers" currently make up about 50 70 percent of the harvest work force in western agriculture, where almost 300,000 workers harvest crops annually, says Patrick H. Quinn, executive vice president of the National Council of Agricultural Employers. Total agricultural work force estimates vary widely because "peak" (harvest) employment can exceed year-round need by a ratio of 20:1, says Quinn. "The largest majority of these illegals work in the short-season, labor-intensive, highly perishable fresh fruit and vegetable commodities," he adds. Illegal aliens are by far the largest component of all alien seasonal work force in U.S. agriculture.

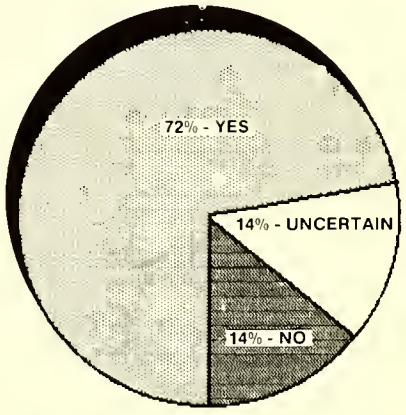
Prime Farmland: Slipping Away?

According to USDA, one million acres of prime farmland, our country's *best* farmland, are lost each year to urban development. About 800,000 acres will be used for housing tracts, highways, airports, industrial sites or parking lots, and another 200,000 acres will be covered by water for manmade lakes and reservoirs. The fact that this land is level and well-drained makes it attractive to builders and developers. So far, attempts to curb the loss by state and local governments have been less than successful.

Most Farmers Satisfied With Jobs

Replying to a 1984 Iowa State University poll, over 1,500 Iowa farmers said they were very satisfied with their occupation and another 39 percent said they were somewhat satisfied, despite the difficult and serious financial problems facing many producers today. Only 16 percent indicated they were dissatisfied as farmers and 4 percent said they were undecided. Almost three-fourths of those who responded said they would become farmers if they could choose their occupation again (below.)

"Would you become a farmer if you could choose your occupation again?"



Land Prices Sink

Land prices continue to slide in most parts of the country. According to *Doane's Agricultural Report*, California, Iowa, Nebraska and parts of Florida have been hit the worst. Nebraska and Iowa show declines of 20 to 25 percent in the last year, and Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma land prices dropped between 15 and 20 percent. It is part of a long, dramatic swing in land values which began in the early 1980s. Iowa land values, for example, have dropped 37 percent since the 1981 peak.

Grain Storage

A lapse in storage management can lead to costly grain deterioration and result in market discounts or reduced feeding value, say researchers at Dekalb-Pfizer Genetics. Stored grain should be checked for storage mold and insects at least every two weeks. Temperature, moisture and oxygen level in the grain system are three important factors to monitor. Cooler grain can tolerate slightly higher moisture content and slightly higher temperature will be less detrimental with drier grain. If you detect significant insect activity in stored grain, you may need to fumigate.

Analyzing Dairy Program

Did the dairy diversion program work? After 30 years of operating the dairy price support program to remove surplus dairy products from the commercial market, the USDA's diversion program was the first attempt to add voluntary supply-management provisions. It apparently helped reduce production and contributed to a sharp drop in government purchases, says USDA dairy economist Cliff Carman. "It's unlikely that this kind of voluntary incentive program can eliminate a surplus the size of the one we had in 1983," he says.

Greenhouse Changes

Greenhouses are changing, due to dramatic design and engineering advances. In Nebraska, agricultural engineers have developed a computer model which can estimate costs for a variety of greenhouse heating and cooling systems. At the University of Massachusetts, engineers have developed a machine for erecting an inflatable "in-field" greenhouse cover, which promises to save heating costs.

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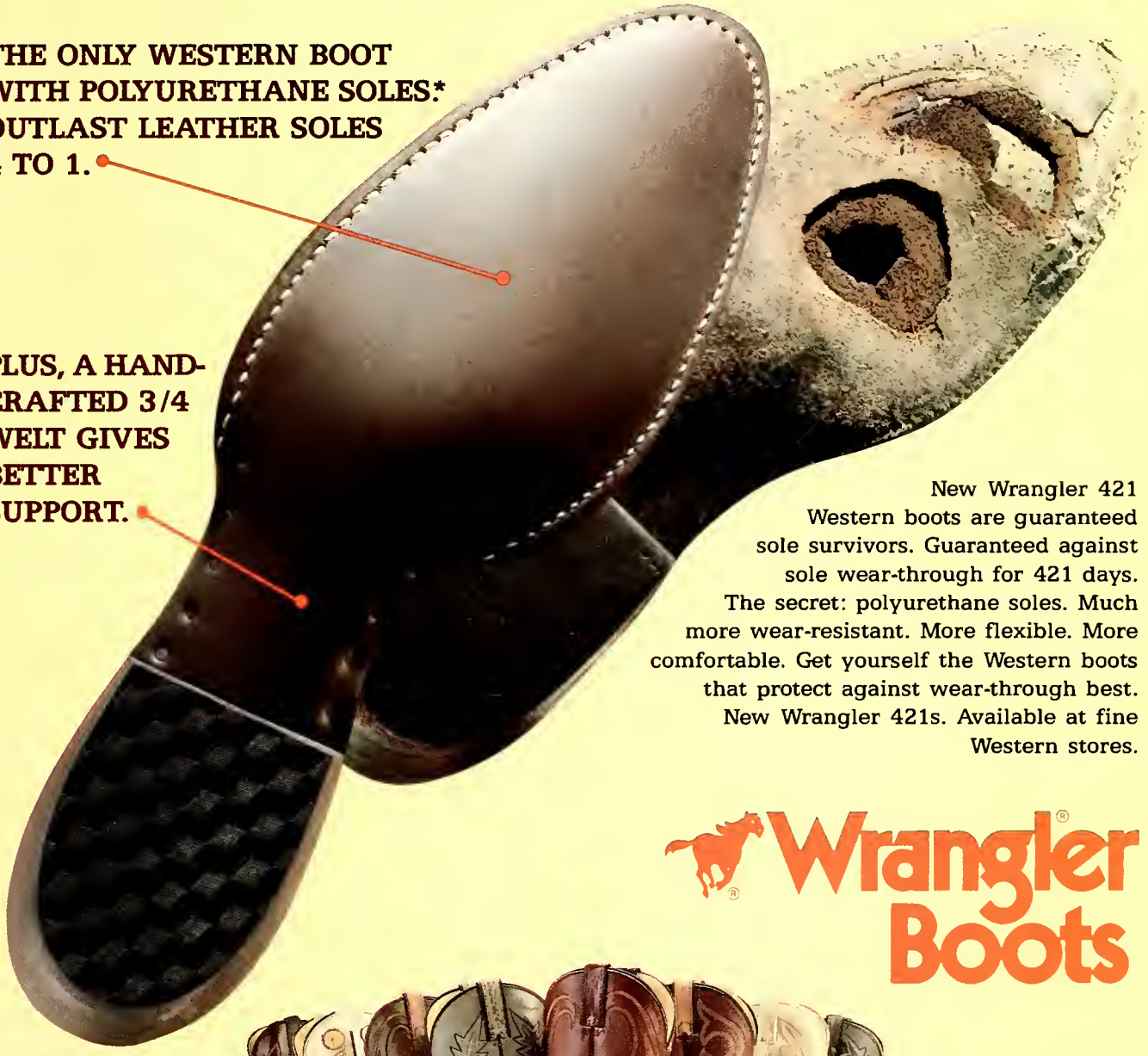

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Photos By Bill Stagg

Agriculture is "still the most vital industry," says Larry Nielson, 1984 Star Farmer of America.

Telling It Like It Is

Told in their own words, the 1984 Star Farmer and Regional Star Farmers reveal how they achieve their goals in farming and FFA

By Larry Nielson
Star Farmer of America
Tulare, South Dakota

THERE were two reasons I took vo-ag. I was interested in farming and the only other choice was home economics. Until entering the vo-ag classroom I did not know anything about FFA.

I enjoyed participating in extra curricular activities, so I got involved in FFA. My first attempts were not too successful: I tried to represent the chapter in the creed speaking contest and lost, then attended the district contests to take part in the FFA test and again lost. Success finally came as part of my Supervised Occupational Experience (SOE) Program, when I achieved Star Greenhand.

My interest in farming itself really was not very strong until my SOE program started bringing returns, and I learned about the rewards and challenges of farming through FFA and vo-ag. I was exposed to agriculture early in life—I was on a tractor as soon as I could reach the pedals safely. Knowing what I was getting myself into was a major factor in my final decision to farm.

Ability to Manage

The ability to manage is the biggest single ability needed to make a living from agriculture. Starting a farm is no different from starting a business on main street. You need knowledge of how to make the business function, and more importantly, how to cause it to make money.

Goals determine progress. I determine my goals, both short and long term, and then make the budget work to satisfy them. This means being very realistic or even pessimistic about your expected crops for the year. At the same time I am striving for the best possible yields and efficiencies. When I have covered my needs I turn to my short and long-term goals for improving the farm. Right now I know what type of machinery will be purchased and improvements made for the next five years. If things work well, the timetable will be speeded up or even better items will be entered as improved goals.

Education and experience determine what advancements you can make. You don't need to be able to recite how plants use fertilizer, but you do need to know the basics, and where to get answers to those hard questions which come up.

Quality is more important than quantity. Efficiency will produce better returns than overwork will. Work hard, but also work smart.

Vital Industry

No matter what gloom and doom you hear, agriculture is still the most vital industry and therefore has a strong future. FFA has a strong responsibility to train those involved to overcome the challenges. Farming is a business now, and all businesses must be able to justify their existence. If the people entering agriculture can be prepared with the knowledge to beat the odds, they will be successful.

My advice to Greenhands is start with what you have and make it the best it can be. Then, move up and try to improve. Quality, not quantity, is what is important. The following is a laundry list of tips:

- Don't be afraid to use debt as a tool for improvement.
- You have valuable resources right at home: your parents and teachers. Use them.
- Be prepared to take advantage of situations. When opportunity knocks, it doesn't like to wait. At the same time, realize your limits and don't bite off more than you can chew.
- Always deal fair. It may be easy money now, but fast deals often haunt you later when the other person has what you need.
- It is almost impossible to start farming today without some help. Whether it be land, machinery, financial or knowledge, any assistance you can get will make it easier to achieve your goals.
- Take advantage of FFA by learning from certain situations and competitions. Now is the time to make your mistakes where they only cost time and effort, not your whole operation. The margins allowed by agriculture today don't often lend a second chance. •••

Setting Goals

By John Kline
Myerstown, Pennsylvania
Eastern Region Star Farmer

My first project in vo-ag was a Holstein heifer and four veal calves. I have since built my herd to 62 registered Holstein cattle, and I farm 123 acres. I have worked to this setup with help from my parents and a "buy-sell" agreement.

My determination led me to the FFA program in ninth grade. One quality of success stressed by my chapter advisor Mr. (Gerald) Strickler was to set goals. These goals were to be realistic goals I could achieve as an FFA member. Being named the eastern region dairy proficiency award winner (1983) and being named eastern region Star Farmer have been

(Continued on Page 38)

A Star Farmer, One Generation Later

Cherie and Richard Engelbrecht.

THE year was 1966. Eleven-thousand FFA members watched as Richard Engelbrecht, a 22-year-old dairy farmer from Madison, New York, was named Star Farmer of America at the National FFA Convention in Kansas City, Missouri.

Much has changed since those days. The crew cuts are gone, interest rates are up, computers sit on farm desk tops...and dairy farmer Richard Engelbrecht has a 17-year-old daughter who wants to follow in his footsteps.

Cherie Engelbrecht, a pretty, dark-eyed junior in the Madison FFA Chapter, says she doesn't necessarily want to become a Star Farmer. But FFA does seem to run in the family. Her interests in leadership and public speaking helped her set her sights on running for state and national FFA offices in the future. She turned heads this year when she was elected chapter president—Madison's first female to lead the chapter.

"I want to get involved in public relations, telling people about agriculture," says Cherie, a Madison honor student. She plans to attend Cornell University next year after graduating.

Cherie knows agriculture. She grew up around it. The family farm consists of 800 acres and 150 milking cows, almost all registered. After losing the farm's original barn in 1979 to a fire, Mr. Engelbrecht redesigned a new one—a unique combination of conventional and free-stall housing with a milking parlor.

Of all farm activities, showing cattle probably ranks highest among family members. Everyone gets involved, including Richard's wife Gail and Cherie's brothers, Randy and Rick. The registered Ayrshire and Holstein cattle are shown at local, state and national shows, such as the World Dairy Expo.

"I haven't missed a year showing cattle at the Boonville Oneida County Fair in 30 years," smiles Mr. Engelbrecht. Cherie owns 18 cows, and is responsible for feeding and caring for all calves on the farm. She has shown cattle since she was 10 years old. Her experience—plus good quality stock—has earned one of her yearling heifers national recognition.

Between past FFA successes and hopes for the future, Cherie and her dad both have a lot to be proud of. And who knows? Maybe 20 years from now, Cherie Engelbrecht will feel just as proud of the *next* generation of Engelbrechts! •••

Clockwise from left: John Kline, eastern region star, Mark McKay, western region star, Steve Rogers, southern region star, and Larry Nielson, Star Farmer of America.

For This National Proficiency Award Winner...

"Good Enough" Just Doesn't Cut It

By Bill Kelsey

THERE are four things that 1984 national ag mechanics proficiency award winner David Seil thanks for his success: an insatiable curiosity about mechanical things; a father who had enough confidence to turn him loose to work on farm machinery at a very early age; a positive attitude; and, above all, an insistence on doing things absolutely right.

Dave, a 1983 graduate of Gowrie, Iowa, studied ag mechanics at a nearby community college followed by one semester in farm operations, before grasping the challenge of a four-year course in farm operations at Iowa State University.

At the age of 20, he may be learning a lot of theory now, but his winning skills in the twin subjects of electrification and ag mechanics were learned the hard way: by practical learning experience and long, careful study of manuals and other books.

"Ever since I was a little kid," he explains, "I have always wanted to take things apart to see how they work. I used to take my electronic toys to pieces and put them back together again, and any time I'm near any kind of implement shop I have to see what they're working on."

SEIL: "Ever since I was a little kid I have always wanted to take things apart to see how they work."

Dave's father, Duane, early recognized his son's mechanical ability and curiosity. Remembering his own childhood, when the inner workings of tractors were still something of a mystery and his own father wouldn't let him touch their machines, Mr. Seil gave Dave the go-ahead. Dave recalls:

"One of my earliest memories is of being allowed to change the oil on a tractor. I was about five, and I'd get the drain plug out and the hot oil would run over my hand. That would startle me so that I'd drop the drain plug into the pail, all the oil would run in on top of it—and I'd have to go fishing for the drain plug at the bottom of five gallons of hot oil."

Despite several scalded fists, Dave persevered. So did his father, and it wasn't long before Dave was tackling far more intricate maintenance and repair jobs on the family's 700-acre crop and livestock farm in the heart of corn and bean country.

Dave Seil says, "You've got to keep that positive attitude." *Photo by Author*

"Dad always had a lot of confidence in me and let me try things," Dave says. "It must have taken a lot of guts on his part."

In his proficiency award application, Dave explains, "I had a fascination for the fine workings of precision machinery and wanted to know what made it tick. Through self-study and my vocational agriculture training, I learned all about engines and machinery maintenance and am now rebuilding engines and performing nearly all the maintenance, service and repairs on our farm machinery."

Privately, Dave adds, "About the only thing I haven't tackled yet is a tractor or combine transmission. I don't think I want to attempt that."

Dave believes a person's attitude has a great bearing on success. "Right now all the newspapers are talking doom and gloom about farming," he says. "But then you go down to Kansas City for the National FFA Convention, and down there they are all saying 'It can be done' and 'Everything's possible.'

"Our chapter advisor, Dennis Kinley, is so positive and enthusiastic, it's great. That's what I like so much about FFA — everyone's so positive in their attitudes."

That's something Dave believes is really important. Whether he's working on his project tractor—a 1949 Farmall ("All I have left to overhaul now is the front end.") or joining in the chapter's BOAC (Building Our American Communities) project (moving the old downtown railroad depot to a new location and refurbishing it for use as a museum), or wiring the family house extension, new garage and machine shed, "you've got to keep that positive attitude," he says.

"Positive," in Dave's case, means not only enthusiasm for the job, but also full regard for safety and for precision in making sure everything is according to specification.

"You've got to check and check again to make sure you've done it right," he declares. "When you're wiring, make sure you ground every single thing that should be grounded. With machinery, torque the nuts twice—yes, do it twice. You might have missed one, or not done it right."

Two years ago, Dave Seil reached the central region ag electrification proficiency award contest, losing out to the eventual national winner. Last year he won his national award in ag mechanics. He believes he owes much of that success to his basic philosophy:

"You have to keep reminding yourself that 'Good Enough' just isn't good enough." •••

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PROFILES IN LEADERSHIP

A Big Future In Farming

Pete Mercer lives on a large, corporate farm where management is the key to survival

By Michael Wilson

ON most simmering summer days in Washington's fertile Yakima valley, one can find fields of corn, hay, hops, potatoes, grapes, asparagus, fruit trees, wheat and a multitude of miscellaneous crops, ripening in the northwest sun.

"You can grow just about anything in the valley," says 19-year-old Peter Mercer, of nearby Prosser, Washington. Pete is one of those few young farmers who could drive an hour before getting from one side of his family's ranch to the other. The family operates "Mercer Ranches, Inc.," 28,000 acres of land which produces a cornucopia of crops and livestock each year. The locals call

Above, Pete Mercer shows a sample from his family's vineyard. Left, a Caterpillar, trailer, potato digger and tractor are needed to harvest potatoes. *Photos by Author*

this territory Horse Heaven Hills, perhaps so named for its boundless beauty and green and gold landscape. "The farm was started way back, probably the early 40s," says Pete, a recent state FFA president. "My grandfather divided it up and ended up with 50,000 acres. Since then we've sold and developed some 20,000 aeres whieh is now what we call Mercer Ranches."

Pete's father, Don, farms in partnership with uncles Rick and Milton, but each farm is a separate corporation. Mueh of the acreage is cattle range and dryland wheat, but over 2,000 acres under circle irrigation produce 10-15 different crops each year, depending on the market outlook. Pete's two uncles specialize in major crops and livestock, and his own family produces apples and special varieties of grapes for wine.

"I'd like to get back into farming after I finish college," says Pete, who attends Walla Walla College. "I like the production and marketing aspects."

There's plenty of both on a place this size. Last year the ranch produced grapes, apples, potatoes, pinto, Mexican jumping and navy beans, sweet corn, c rrots, alfalfa, wheat, barley and alfalfa seed. "We've also grown turnips and onions and sugar beets when the market was good," says Pete.

The farm leaped into a new era in 1968 after the John Day Dam was built on the nearby Columbia River. The Mercers installed a pump station and set up irrigation circles, giving the farm the ability to grow a diverse line of crops. That diversity boosts farm profits.

"Farmers buy on a competitive market and sell on a set market," he says. "It's always going to be like that. But with more crops, selling on the set market gives us certain advantages that other industries don't have. Let's say corn, wheat and cattle are selling for low prices, and that's all you produce. You're up a creek without a paddle. But when you're as diversified as we are you can always count on something making money, if you market wisely."

Management

Pete works for his uncle in the summers, driving combines and trucks. With so many crops to harvest, experience and management is needed. "You really learn a lot when you work at such a large place," Pete says. "Each crop requires different irrigation levels, different tillage and planting, and different fertilizer rates."

Such an array of crops means workers must be able to operate several different pieces of equipment. Five different pieces of harvesting equipment are needed to harvest crops between July and December, including combines, potato diggers, carrot diggers and swathers.

"Working on a crew is really a lot of fun," says Pete. "You meet a lot of different types of people. It seems like the only time you get to talk to these people is when you're deiseling up in the morning and eating lunch together at noon, but still you get these mental communications going when you're sitting inside a wheat truck. You can look at a combine driver and know what he wants you to do from the expression on his face. If he's frowning, then you know you're in the wrong place."

Harvest days are long — about 14 hours, Pete says. He may be the boss's nephew, but Pete works the same hours as other workers. "When you're working for your own father or uncle, you've really got to watch yourself," he says. "It's a lot harder working for a relative because you don't want to be favored over the others.

"We are constantly working our tails off," he adds. "I've really come to respect how hard the agriculture life is."

With 25 full-time employees, including managers, a secretary, two mechanics and field hands, one might expect some occasional rough handling of the equipment. Not so, says Pete. "Our managers have worked for us for several years," he explains. "You can go to farms in different parts of the state where they're just as big, and the equipment isn't as well kept up as ours. Our employees treat things as if they were their own. They take pride in what they do."

Vertical Integration

The size of the Mercer operation allows them to market crops directly to companies, often skipping brokerage firms. "We try to market everything we can by ourselves," says Pete. "When you do that you're able to sell on the fresh market for a higher price. It's the same with our equipment. If we can fix it ourselves, we save a lot of money. We stock most of the parts for our center pivots, tractors and trucks. In doing all the preventative maintence that we do, we can keep a rig running a lot longer. When you have the facilities to do it, it's going to cut down the costs."

The Mercer farm "shop" can hold up to five four-wheel-drive tractors. Their fleet contains "practically every range of John Deere tractor," grins Pete, "from a 40-horse orchard tractor to 350 hp." Other equipment includes two Caterpillar tractors to level land and rake out irrigation circles, and a grader for the 150 miles of ranch road that is graded once a year. Two semi-trucks, three ten-wheelers and a number of smaller trucks are used to haul crops.

Pete and his sister Elizabeth check a nozzle on the vineyard's irrigation system.

Besides his interest in farming, Pete says he may someday get involved in politics. He's made it his hobby to follow issues. He also wants to double the 140-acre vineyard and grow a couple hundred more acres of apples, "if the market stays good."

Pete has already started building for his future. He has accumulated shares in the family corporation — which is still, he argues, a "family" operation. "The family farm is not dying out and it's not getting smaller," he says. "It's just that farming is so much of a business now it's a lot smarter to have a corporation.

"Ours is a relatively small farm compared to neighboring farms," he says. "Some of the larger farms who thought that 'bigger was better' in the 70s are now going broke. The really *well-managed* farms have managed to keep above water.

"Twenty thousand acres doesn't make you a millionaire," he adds. "It's a lot on paper, but a guy could live just as comfortably off an 800-acre farm as 20,000 acres if he managed things right." •••

PROFILES IN LEADERSHIP

Cindy Blair has achieved in both FFA production and leadership activities. For this Oklahoma state officer,

The Sky's The Limit

Interview By
Russ Florence

Cindy Blair is as much at home on the farm as she is as a state officer.

Editor's note: The plaques on the den wall at Cindy Blair's home probably best tell her story.

She was both Star Greenhand and Star Chapter Farmer at her FFA chapter in Noble, Oklahoma. Then she won two divisions of the state public speaking finals and later won the state sheep proficiency award. The next day she was elected state FFA secretary. Seven months later she placed second nationally in the extemporaneous public speaking contest, and finally, she earned the western region proficiency award in diversified livestock production...during her term as the state's first female FFA president.

Cindy, 19, is a sophomore in agricultural economics at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater. Despite the fact she now spends much time in school and with FFA activities, Cindy hopes to someday return to her first love: agriculture. She speaks out strongly for her profession, and intends to continue her support as both producer and policy maker.

The Blair family is a strong one. Cindy is the originator and caretaker of 123 head of Hampshire sheep, Duroc swine and commercial cattle on the family's tidy farm in central Oklahoma. She spoke out recently about public speaking, production agriculture, a female's role in agriculture—and what it takes to become successful:

FUTURE FARMER: Cindy, people join FFA for a lot of different reasons. What are yours?

BLAIR: I was active in 4-H and did a lot of public speaking. But I first got involved in FFA for the opportunities in livestock judging. I enjoyed it and wanted to learn more about it. The FFA turned out totally different than I ever thought. It provides so many different leadership activities, many areas I never expected.

FUTURE FARMER: What have you gained most from FFA?

BLAIR: Self confidence and optimism. I developed self confidence by becoming active. Before FFA, I used to just sit back and watch other people. I gained self confidence by keeping involved. I used to be really shy. Before the FFA, I had never heard anything about setting goals. I soon came to realize it was helping me whether I was reaching them or not. In working toward it, I was growing.

FUTURE FARMER: They say you sometimes learn your biggest lessons from failing. Is there any specific incident you value as a great learning experience?

BLAIR: (Laughs) I wrote this 'tremendous' FFA speech that I thought I would take to nationals. I ended up getting seventh out of nine at the local level. I was so crushed. I thought I was going to die. My speech was about current agriculture issues and they were picking leadership speeches that night.

But I did win extemporaneous that night. My ag teacher came up to me and said, 'You just won extemp,' and I said, 'So what, that's not my division.' He said, 'You can go just as far in extemp as you could in prepared. But you have to make that decision tonight.'

It turned out that the materials I had found in research for the FFA speech helped me all the way to nationals in extemp. He was right. Sometimes we make plans for ourselves we limit ourselves and put a ceiling on other things we're able to do.

FUTURE FARMER: After winning in a division you weren't even counting on, how did you manage to succeed all the way to the national contest?

BLAIR: I placed second at district. (In Oklahoma, you must place first or second at district to advance to the state finals.) I just skinned by. After that, I went to an ag teacher who I knew was good at extemp preparation, and we talked about possible topics and researched.

FUTURE FARMER: Would you say research is the most important part of extemporaneous speaking?

BLAIR: No, being mentally prepared is most important. You must get totally psyched and be as positive as possible. Don't listen to others who are scared. I remember right before I drew my topic at nationals, Mark Herndon (a former na-

(Continued on Page 22)

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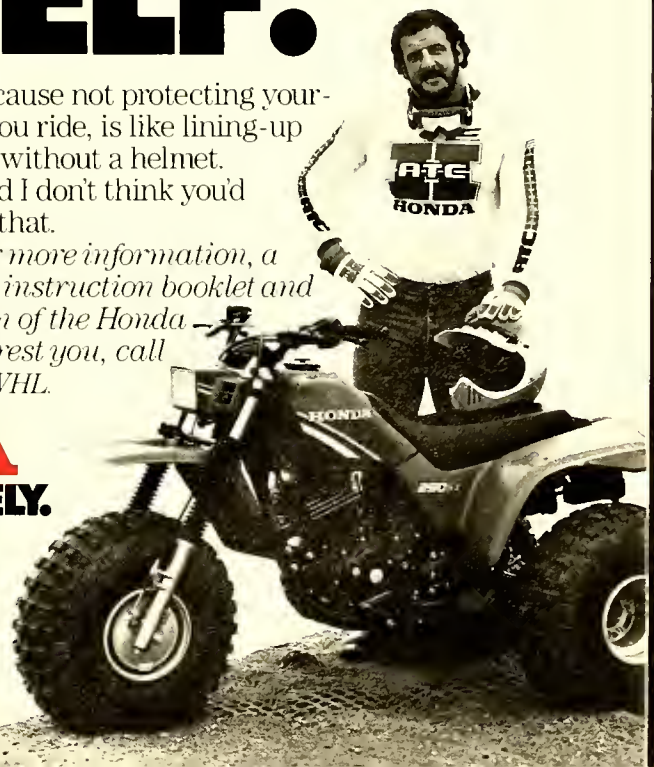

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Blair

(Continued from Page 20)

tional president) came over and asked what topic I wanted, and we prayed for the longest time. But it's not luck. God had something planned for me.

FUTURE FARMER: Why did you get involved in extemporaneous speaking in the first place?

BLAIR: My sophomore year, I got involved through my advisor. My first contest, I was a nervous wreck. I didn't make time and all my cards fell off the podium onto the floor.

FUTURE FARMER: When you were a Greenhand, did you ever dream you would be the first female state president of Oklahoma?

BLAIR: I thought another one would be elected before my time. And back then, I didn't realize how difficult it was to get elected. I didn't think it was that big of an issue. By my senior year, I started realizing how serious of a commitment it was and that it wasn't just a job title.

FUTURE FARMER: What do you enjoy most about being state president?

BLAIR: Probably the one-on-one individual encouragement I'm able to give to FFA members. I love urging them to set goals; and to believe in themselves. Greenhands are such an inspiration, just to watch them grow and mature. I just like being around other FFA members.

FUTURE FARMER: What has been the most difficult part of being state president?

BLAIR: (Pauses) I guess it's the barrier that's sometimes created when the younger ones find out I'm the state president. They sometimes don't realize that I'm just one of them and that all officers started out just where they are.

FUTURE FARMER: Do you think your being the first female president will now open doors for other hopeful girls?

BLAIR: Regardless of whether it's male or female, I hope the members will keep in mind to elect the one who will do the best job and the one who is most qualified.

FUTURE FARMER: How do people react when when they find out you're the state president of the Future Farmers of America?

BLAIR: "I hope the image (of FFA) changes...to more of an organization that develops leadership in young people and not so much just ol' farm kids. That's the image to a lot of people now. That image is improving nationally, but it still needs a lot of work in local communities."

BLAIR: (Laughs) I get a lot of mixed reactions. I ran across one man who said I couldn't be state president of the Future Farmers of America because girls aren't allowed to be in it. I'll bet we argued for five minutes. But people normally encourage me to support agriculture and the programs young people represent. They think it's okay to have a female representative of agriculture.

FUTURE FARMER: Do women have a role as policy makers?

BLAIR: Agriculture needs people who can stand up and speak out. It's not that a man can't do it or that a woman is better at it than a man. But when women speak out for agriculture, it opens doors for a whole new group of people as far as communicating between the consumer and the producer.

FUTURE FARMER: How will FFA benefit you, say, five years from now?

BLAIR: The experiences I've gained in time management and in organizing. Being a state officer has provided me with the challenges of turning into an adult. The additional responsibilities this year have definitely helped me grow up and mature. I think I have my eyes more in the right direction now. As strange as it sounds, I'm no longer real worried about impressing everyone. I just serve the people in the way that I think is right.

FUTURE FARMER: Which would you say you've enjoyed more, giving speeches or production agriculture?

BLAIR: I'm not really sure. Writing a speech was one of the hardest things for me to do. I enjoyed practicing and preparing, and studying for questions. And in production, there's that tranquility, knowing those animals depend on me.

FUTURE FARMER: Do you think speeches and leadership will ever dominate the FFA?

BLAIR: I don't know that speeches will ever reach the same level as the production aspect. I hope the image (of FFA) changes, though, in the eyes of adults, the community, and legislators, to more of an organization that develops leadership in young people and not so much just ol' farm kids. That's the image to a lot of people now. That image is improving nationally, but it still needs a lot of work in local communities.

FUTURE FARMER: Why do you enjoy working with high school students so much?

BLAIR: A lot of people took the time to help me as a youngster. When I was a sophomore, I had a big inferiority complex. It seemed that most of the people who worked with me were associated with FFA: advisors, parents, state officers. They all helped me grow out of that. I enjoy doing the same for other people.

FUTURE FARMER: What would you say is the one thing that makes a person a success?

BLAIR: Their decision to be successful. Success is measured in so many different ways. Success to me is your desire to be just that. It's not what you attain, but the effort you put into being what you consider a success and reaching the things you want.

Just believe in yourself. Never look at someone else and feel like you can't attain that position or level. Never feel a goal is too high to reach. •••

Preparing for the Oklahoma State FFA convention: getting experience in time management, organizing.

PROFILES IN LEADERSHIP

Man Of Many Faces

Right, Tony gives his winning speech at the 1983 National Convention. Below, checking soybean seeding on his family's farm near Dublin, Georgia.

TONY Edmond is a hard man to pin down. As soon as you think you've got him figured out, he changes. Put him in front of a crowded room or auditorium full of FFA members and he'll have 'em hanging on every word, mesmerized. At home or with friends, it's a different story. His lightning-quick smile and wit sometimes make it difficult to tell when he's serious.

Fact is, the only thing really consistent about Tony is his love for FFA and his dedication to agriculture.

"I really didn't know much about FFA when I first joined," says the 18-year-old from a small farm near Dublin, Georgia. Hailing from a big family, the opportunities didn't come easy for Tony. He wanted more — and he found it in the FFA, establishing himself as a chapter and state leader. In 1983 he served as Georgia state president and won the national extemporaneous public speaking title. He earned his Georgia Planter (State Farmer) Degree by working in turf and landscape management, agribusiness and vegetable production. His family farms row crops and manages timberland, but Tony's interests have always gravitated toward public speaking and leadership.

"I started out in prepared speaking my first year, but by the next year I decided to change to extemp," he says. "At first I was really worried about it. But I learned that you have to go to an extemp contest *knowing* you are really prepared."

Strategically, Tony says being the first speaker in a contest is always best. "I like to be first 'cause I can set a standard that the other speakers have to live up to," he says.

No notes

Tony wasn't the first speaker when he competed in the national contest. In fact, things didn't go his way at all. "We all prepared in another building," he recalls. "I had my notes all ready, and we walked outside in the bright sunlight to get to the auditorium. Once inside it was difficult to see because my eyes weren't adjusted. When my eyes finally got used to the darkness I went on stage and was practically blinded by the spotlights."

At that moment he was facing 20,000 FFA members and was expected to give an extemporaneous speech. "I couldn't see my notes or my stopwatch. That worried me," Tony says. But he fought off feelings of panic and let his confidence guide him. "I set them down on the lectern and walked away. I took the microphone and never once looked at my notes or the watch."

That confidence and experience paid off for Tony that day. Both speech and timing was flawless. (He came within five seconds of going over time.)

"I knew I could win national if I ever got out of the southern region," he says, looking back. "I concentrated on speech throughout my years in FFA. That was my specialty."

Tony's winning subject that day was export marketing, but he often builds speeches around his favorite topic: agricultural leadership. "Leadership is one of the fundamentals," he says. "I just build on what I had been taught in FFA. I can talk for a long time on leadership."

Tony put his speaking ability to good use as Georgia state president last year. "I had banquets sometimes every night for five nights a week," he says. It was a lot of work, but he thinks traveling and meeting people all over the state is worth it. He wondered at first if he could handle the stress ("all-night drives"), the paperwork, or his ability to meet many people at one time. "This was something I'd always wanted to do. I just figured I had to believe in myself," Tony says.

Tony currently attends Middle Georgia College with plans to transfer to the University of Georgia to study agriculture education. He is just as excited about being involved in FFA as a vo-ag teacher as he was as a member. "FFA sets itself apart from all other youth organizations," he says. "It gives hands-on experience, leadership training and opportunities to meet people. Most organizations can't do that. It helped me to become a better public speaker.

"And besides," Tony grins, mustering his best Georgia drawl. "Us southern boys just know how to speak." •••

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Brunswick Comes Back

This up-and-coming vo-ag department typifies how vocational agriculture and FFA can provide needed training and opportunities in a community

By Michael Wilson

We hear stories of vo-ag programs in trouble: those on the edge of elimination, or threatened by cutbacks. It's a serious problem for vocational agriculture.

Fortunately, not all vo-ag departments are going out of business. In fact, some departments, like the one at Brunswick, Maryland, are growing, meeting the needs of local communities and spurring FFA members on to team and individual achievements. It's a success story which needs to be told more often.

Brunswick is a community of 8,000, about 50 miles northwest of Washington, D.C. Small dairy farms dot the hills which surround the city, but there are fewer farmers here today than ten years earlier, due to urban development.

In spite of that problem, the local high school began a vo-ag program in 1972 as a result of a farmer survey and pressure from key community leaders. At best, it enjoyed a shaky and perilous beginning. It wasn't until 1980, when instructor Karen Arrington took over the program that Brunswick began to make its mark among Maryland vo-ag departments. Two years later, instructor Doug Hering signed on, contributing production agriculture courses to the horticulture classes Ms. Arrington already taught. The program has changed dramatically since both teachers arrived.

"The first year they were here you could see things start to change," says Kevin Smith, a ninth grade Brunswick student at the time of Arrington's arrival. Although he hailed from a farm, Kevin had decided against taking vo-ag at Brunswick. "It seemed like vo-ag was rock bottom. I figured it was a waste of time," he recalls. Kevin's parents, Jane and Charlie Smith, convinced him to give it a try. Kevin enjoyed it so much he went on to become a state dairy proficiency winner, Maryland Star Farmer, the chapter's first American Farmer degree winner and first state officer. He now heads up the Brunswick FFA alumni chapter.

Charlie and Jane Smith are just as enthusiastic about the Brunswick resurgence. "I think the people in the community are just now beginning to realize what the FFA has to offer here in Brunswick," says Mr. Smith, a Maryland county ag commissioner.

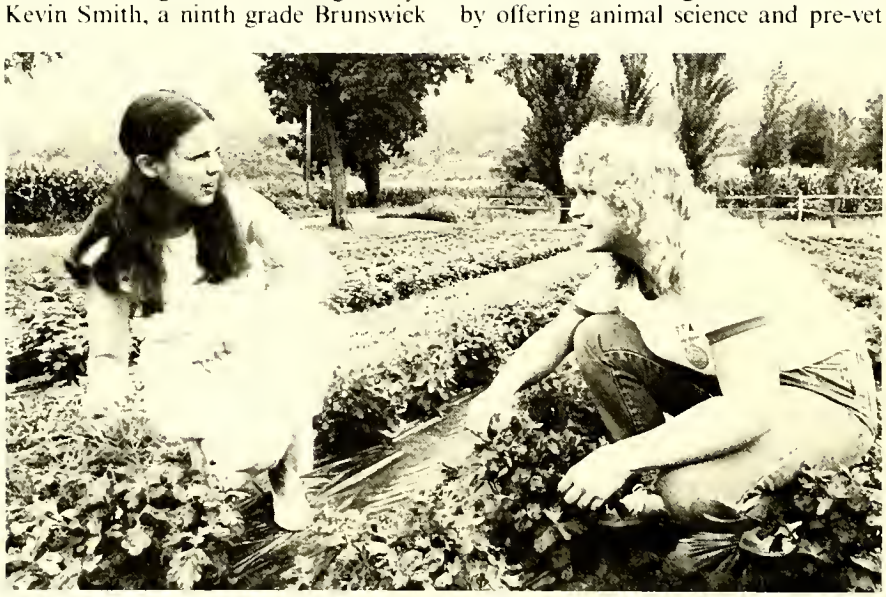
Arrington says part of the success is due to good school administrative support, plus an open-mind about course curriculum. "Whatever types of students come through the door, we try to provide for," she says. "The key is to be sensitive to the interests and needs of students."

As a result, the instructors have broadened the scope of vo-ag course work. One independent study class has 16 students, each learning something different. While Arrington teaches most horticulture-related classes, Hering concentrates on production agriculture. He has attracted more college-bound students by offering animal science and pre-vet programs.

"That's what keeps me involved," says Cheryl Rumer, 1984 state proficiency winner in floriculture. "Ms. Arrington is not like other teachers. We are able to learn what we're interested in. We don't have to follow some book."

Cheryl was just one of five state proficiency winners from Brunswick last year, proof of the program's re-birth.

Chapter officer Adrienne Shaffer feeds one of her prize-winning dairy goats.



Karen Arrington, left, visits Sherri Haupt, one of five Brunswick state proficiency winners last year.

Meet Bob Arnold, One o

By John Dutcher

No one ever picked fruit from a tree that wasn't planted. And no one at Brunswick FFA would enjoy the success the chapter seems to have come by if it hadn't been for a few "founding fathers," who helped set the chapter on a course for success. If the chapter is looking for the roots of their success, they might just find that some of them were planted by Bob Arnold.

At 20, Bob doesn't sound old enough to be set in the annals of Brunswick FFA history. But his hard work helped spur the once fledgling chapter on toward success, his advisors say.

Bob was chapter secretary in 1980 when Karen Arrington came to teach vo-ag. The chapter was in debt and enrollment was dwindling. "She had lots of new ideas," says Bob. "We were sure

Brunswick FFA members have earned several state and American Farmer degrees in recent years, and an eastern region proficiency winner in 1983. The chapter consistently places high in BOAC, Safety and national chapter contests. Last year the Brunswick floriculture, parliamentary procedure, dairy products and nursery judging teams captured first place in the state.

In spite of the new winning tradition, competition is not a focal point, says Arrington. "Nobody makes a big deal if a team doesn't win," she says. "But they support each other when they compete, win or lose. Some people will bring two or three carloads of people to each event, just to support each other."

What *is* stressed is turning students' interests into careers. Sherri Haupt, 1984 state winner in nursery operations, began her FFA project by growing 100 chrysanthemums in her back yard. By 1983 she was producing eight times that amount and sold flowers both retail and wholesale to nurseries and grocery stores. She also learned to make floral designs, and this year she plans to grow 3,500 mums. She expects to purchase an additional 25 acres near her home for expansion.

MOATS: "What these two did for the FFA program was unheard of. You never used to see FFA jackets walking through the halls. Now we can be proud of our chapter."

The program's flexibility is appreciated most by non-farm students. Dwayne Moats, 19, says when he was asked to join FFA three years ago, his response was, "I'm not a farmer."

"But then Mr. Hering explained, 'All you have to be is interested in agriculture to join FFA.' So I tried it and I've really learned a lot," says Dwayne. Since he lived in town, Mr. Hering suggested Dwayne start a turf and landscape project. He began by mowing one lawn, then quickly grew to 15 customers and responsibility for a baseball field. He now does landscaping for a community college, where he has taken horticulture classes.

"What these two did for the FFA program was unheard of," Dwayne says, echoing the feelings of many Brunswick residents. "You never used to see FFA jackets walking through the halls. Now we're giving demonstrations to the other school groups. Now we can be proud of our chapter." •••

Cheryl Rumer has gained experience and skills in floral design.

Doug Hering, right, talks with FFA'er Bill Allen, one Brunswick graduate who returned to the farm.

Brunswick's "Founding Fathers"

willing to try them."

As a chapter officer, Bob did all he could to smooth over Arrington's transition as teacher and advisor. "He was my right-hand man," Arrington says. "He invented and constructed whatever we needed." That year Bob renovated the greenhouse and built a cold frame for the chapter's horticultural money-making projects. He even surveyed and helped plant an orchard for the chapter.

"I was willing to help whenever I could," says Bob. In addition to the construction he did for the chapter, Bob also took full advantage of the vo-ag department's shop to repair tractors and implements from his farm. With a shortage of production agriculture students at the time, advisor Doug Hering was glad to see Bob's equipment in the shop. He was also pleased that Bob let other students help him. "Bob has always been one that's glad to share whatever he knows," says Hering.

Bob says, "I was willing to help whenever I could."

Bob's hard work at Brunswick has not been without recognition. In addition to Star Greenhand and Chapter Farmer awards, Bob served as chapter president and won stacks of plaques for his many talents and achievements. The highlight of Bob's FFA career came last November when he received his American Farmer degree.

"The FFA has pushed me to go further and learn more about agriculture," says Bob. On the other hand, Bob has pushed his FFA chapter on toward success, too. For Bob and Brunswick FFA, success has been a two-way street. Together they have put down good roots.

Years from now, someone may walk behind Brunswick High School and wonder who planted the lovely orchard. Most people will have forgotten. But Bob knows. •••

FFA ONLINE

Kevin Gingerich, FFA's top Computers In Agriculture winner.

Agricultural Computer Winners...

Develop New Tools For More Profitable Farming

These FFA computer wizards rely on imagination and agricultural know-how to help farm and agribusiness needs

By Cara Doyle

Meet three entrepreneurs: Kevin Gingerich, Debra Haack and Dotty Behne. These young leaders have turned their dreams into reality using a new farm management tool called the farm computer. They are part of a growing legion of FFA members who use imagination and agricultural know-how to develop new computer software for agribusiness and farm needs.

Considering the difficult economic problems facing most farmers, finding ways to make more profit on the farm by using computer technology is a big farm need.

"Time is money in farming," says Kevin Gingerich, 19, of Kokomo, Indiana. Kevin placed first in the FFA's new Computers In Agriculture Contest last year. "A computer can cut the time it takes to run 'what if' options and comparisons," he says. It's a "tool for management, not tasks. Agriculture is a business. And just like a computer can benefit any other business, it can benefit agriculture," Kevin believes.

Debra Haack, 20, of Fond du Lac,

Dotty Behne, below, helps a neighboring farmer set up an income statement.

Debra Haack, below, and her mother Dolores, update one of the sire selection programs.

Wisconsin, says, "It can mean big time savings if someone is willing to take the time to maintain the records." Debra placed second in the contest. "In the long run, using the computer as a tool saves money, with better feeding and other management practices made possible by comparing figures."

Third-place winner Dotty Behne, of Sherburn, Minnesota, agrees with her fellow winners. "In the long run, you can use the computer to save time and also help farmers understand the benefits of good records. It's necessary for us to learn how to use computers—they'll be around for a long time."

Computerized Grain Marketing

Kevin Gingerich surveyed grain marketing outlets and then used the data to compute the highest possible net income. He used the information to write a computer program that helps area farmers make better marketing decisions—and more profit.

"I was amazed to learn that there's a vast difference in net returns when selling grain to different dealers," Kevin says. "For example, I recently had the computer evaluate the sale of corn to ten different grain dealers and found a difference in net return of over $110 on a 400-bushel load."

Kevin also used his computer skills to find crop costs, cash flow, financial analysis and livestock budgets. He worked with the chapter reporter on word processing. The chapter can now write news releases on the computer to publicize their chapter's activities and also maintain an address file. "The computer is also a help to keep financial records of my Supervised Occupational Experience (SOE) program," he says.

Now studying at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, Kevin plans to remain involved in the development of agricultural software—especially programs that will help increase a farmer's bottom line profit.

Dairy Sire Selection

Debra Haack is just as ambitious in learning about computers. She developed a variety of software programs to increase the profitability of her family's dairy farm. After buying a computer in 1982, she designed software programs for breeding, reproduction, vaccination and identification records.

"A comprehensive dairy sire selection program has been my biggest accomplishment," she says. "It's set up on a linear trait evaluation scale developed by the Holstein Association. Top 'Predicted Difference dollar' (PD$) bulls are entered in large files. The operator enters the three major weaknesses of a cow and the computer does the rest. The program chooses the top bulls which would be most suitable mating to the cow to improve on one, two or all three of her major weaknesses."

The program was so successful, she is copyrighting her software and planning to market it.

Debra studied at Lakeshore Technical Institute for dairy herd management, and now works part-time on her home dairy farm. She plans to continue to develop and market programs and eventually work with a computer company—possibly by continuously updating programs she has created.

"It takes incentive to learn more than just what's given at school," Debra says regarding success in using computers.

Farm Financial Management

Dotty Behn stresses "patience" and the "desire to learn" as keys for computer success. She used the computer to set up financial management programs for area farmers and businessmen. The programs included cash flows, income statements, net worth statements, income and expense ledgers, crop and livestock decision aids and futures market helpers.

"My major goal is to make financial planning and decision-making clearer and easier for the farmer," she says. "It doesn't save time when you enter the data, but the computer will file reports for you and save time from paging through all the record books later. There's also less chance for error.

"I just want to help the farmer find the best program for his individual financial situation," she adds. Dotty plans to continue working with area farmers, demonstrating software and evaluating its strengths and weaknesses for their farm operations. She'll also demonstrate her skills at the Minnesota FFA Convention in April.

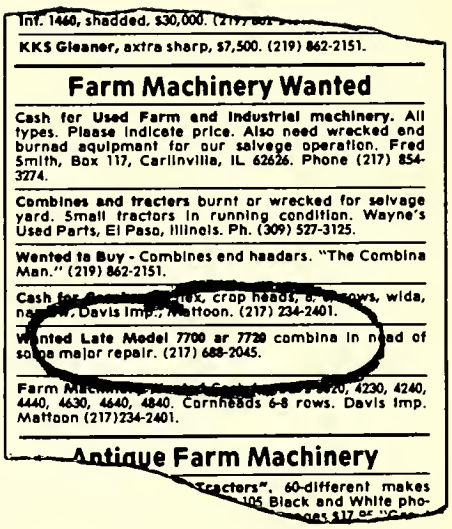
"It doesn't take any special computer skill to be successful," says Dotty. "You just have to enjoy it, want to learn, and not give up easily." •••

Above, Dotty and her father Nathan work together to put the family's trucking business records on a computer. Below, Debra checks her select sire summary book.

Below, Dotty encourages students to learn how computers can help them in ag careers.

Sizing Up Used Machinery

Choosing the right equipment for your farm is an important management task you'll want to investigate carefully. Here are some tips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KKS Gleaner, extra sharp, $7,500. (219) 862-2151.

Farm Machinery Wanted

Cash for Used Farm and Industrial machinery. All types. Please indicate price. Also need wrecked and burned equipment for our salvage operation. Fred Smith, Box 117, Carlinville, IL 62626. Phone (217) 854-3274.

Combines and tractors burnt or wrecked for salvage yard. Small tractors in running condition. Wayne's Used Parts, El Paso, Illinois. Ph. (309) 527-3125.

Wanted to Buy - Combines and headers. "The Combine Man." (219) 862-2151.

Cash for [illegible] crop heads, 6 rows, wide, na[illegible]. Davis Imp., Mattoon. (217) 234-2401.

Wanted Late Model 7700 or 7720 combine in need of some major repair. (217) 688-2045.

Farm Mach[illegible] 4020, 4230, 4240, 4440, 4630, 4640, 4840. Cornheads 6-8 rows. Davis Imp. Mattoon (217)234-2401.

Antique Farm Machinery

[illegible]Tractors". 60-different makes [illegible]105 Black and White pho[illegible]

As more farmers go out of business, more used machinery becomes available to beginning producers. This machinery is often in good working order, and usually can be bought for several thousand dollars less than new. The trick is making sure you get the right equipment for your needs.

"I would say it's wise for someone just getting started to buy used equipment instead of new, because of price," says David Wenger, one of four brothers who own and operate Wenger's Farm Machinery, Inc., in Myerstown, Pennsylvania. "The thing about buying a new piece of equipment, even with financing, is that once you drive it off the lot it depreciates considerably. A used piece won't depreciate as much."

David and brothers Lloyd, Larry and Glenn Wenger are as familiar with FFA as they are the family-owned equipment business. Three of the brothers earned the title of Star Agribusinessman from the eastern region as FFA members.

Just because used equipment is cheaper doesn't make it a better buy. Figuring what you can afford takes careful judgment, and equipment markets and prices are different in different parts of the country, he cautions. Here are a few general guidelines:

Appearance. "The overall appearance of a piece of equipment will tell me a lot of what I need to know," he says. Check for signs of good maintenance in the cab, tires and engine. Check tractors to see if PTO and three-point hitch systems work, and look for oil leaks.

"If I see a clean tractor, even if it's 15 to 20 years old, I figure it's probably been taken care of," he adds. According to David, the number of hours on a tractor is important, but it's only critical if you can't find parts. "A few older International Harvester models are sometimes difficult to find parts for," he says, "but it all depends on your local dealer." In general, equipment that has been well cared for or stored under cover will be a better value – and demand a better price.

Check the sound of the engine. If you see unusual amounts of smoke or blow-by, the tractor may need a major overhaul. If the engine looks and sounds considerably younger than the tractor, it may already have been overhauled. This can boost the amount of useful service left in the machine.

Checkpoints. On all equipment check bearings, hoses, sprockets, belts and augers. Check the teeth on hay rakes and the knotter on balers. If you plan to buy a moldboard plow, check to see that the frogs and moldboards are not too thin. Try to determine if parts are worn because of average use or because of neglect.

"A lot of times you can match tire wear to the hour meter on tractors," says David. "On a tractor with 1,500 hours you would expect tires to be poor. At 2,000 hours, the tractor should more likely have new tires."

Check a tractor's oil and oil filter. Take a tractor through its gears, checking for brake resistance and free pedal in the clutch.

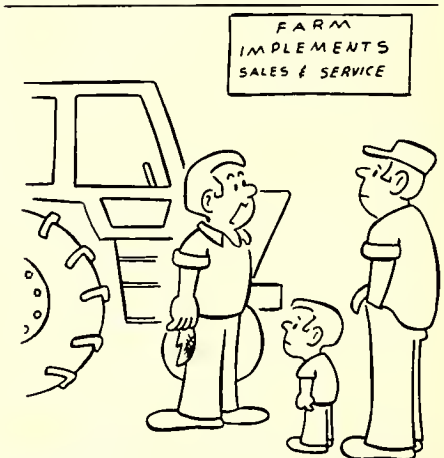
Value. Used equipment supply may be up, but it's localized, David says. "Farmers who are in economically sound areas of the country expect bargains, but it stands to reason that the supply remains normal in good economic areas," he says.

As you compare, look for value. You may run across a cheaper price tag, but it doesn't necessarily translate into a better buy. You can often get a better price if you're willing to change brands of equipment.

"If a guy has been reared on a farm and his dad used John Deere tractors all his life, he probably wants a John Deere," says David. "But you can get the same amount of horsepower and quality for less money with another brand, because the resale value on John Deere equipment is higher than most."

If you are just starting in farming, check which dealers in the area will provide the best parts and service. You may prefer an Allis Chalmers tractor, but if a dealer is not located nearby, check another brand.

You should also evaluate just how much equipment you need on your operation, taking into consideration leasing or sharing options. Jot down your horsepower needs and price range. Make notes on different purchase options, and keep them in mind at machinery auctions. Be sure to check equipment over thoroughly before making a bid. •••



"According to the company, the part you need will be here about the time your son starts farming."

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The New Case International

By Wilson Carnes

A MAJOR change in American agriculture was unveiled in Las Vegas in late February. J I Case called together its new dealer organization for a look at the new product line and to explain how the company will operate with the acquisition of International Harvester farm equipment operations by Tenneco, Inc., the parent company for both groups.

Using the theme "We Are One," officials made it clear Case and IH are now one company. Tractors and equipment in the future will carry both the Case and IH logo which officials said retains the best of both traditions. Dealer signs will also feature the combined trademarks. The name of the overall company remains J I Case.

Former IH dealers appeared pleased when the new colors and graphics for the Case International product line were unveiled. Dealers first saw a Case Model 2096 tractor featuring a major IH hallmark—the characteristic IH red—along with the traditional Case black stripe, now with silver accents.

When the merger is complete, Case International will have a network of about 2,200 dealers.

The IH dealer organization is considered to be one of the greatest assets of the acquisition, according to James K. Ketelsen, chairman of the board for Tenneco. "You can't build another like it today," he said.

The Case International Model 2096 comes in the characteristic IH red.

ecutive Officer Jerome K. Green said, "Our industry expects more mergers of the kind we are going through." He noted that the new Case International organization combines the strength of Case's tractor technology with the respected IH dealer network and line of agricultural equipment. •••

case IH

All dealers will offer a full line of tractors, combines and farm implements bearing the Case International nameplate. Dealers will carry two- and four-wheel drive agriculture tractors up to 400 gross engine horsepower. Over 95-hp units are of the Case design, and feature the Case Intelligent Center, a comprehensive electronic monitoring system. Under 95-hp models include both Case and IH designs. The new Case diesel engines, recently introduced in the Case 96 series tractors, will gradually be phased into all of the company's agricultural equipment.

Crop harvesting and production equipment will include the Early Riser Cyclo (R) Air Planters and Axial-Flow (R) combines.

Effective March 1 through May 31, 1985, several financing options and rebates will be available through Case.

In his first address to the new dealer network, Case President and Chief Ex-

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News, Notes, and Nonsense from Everywhere

Chapter Scoop

by Jack Pitzer

Cottonwood, AL, Chapter's county fair exhibit showed the diversity of the vo-ag program—forestry, fish and wildlife, ag mechanics, ag products, horticulture and soil management.

N-N-N

State Highway Patrolman Sam Hill spoke to the *Southeast,* OH, Chapter about tractor and motor vehicle safety on highways.

N-N-N

Three ideas from *Fairfield,* IA, Chapter to make meetings more fun. Game idea for barn warming dance was a race to see who could drink a soft drink fastest with a lamb nipple on the bottle. For a program feature they had the president give a slide report on his week at Washington Leadership Conference. And after the family watermelon bust in September, the FFA also has melon for the varsity football players.

N-N-N

Penta County, OH, members sold Christmas gift bows to raise money to feed a needy family for the holiday. The FFA also sent poinsettias to local shut-ins.

N-N-N

Beside the money local business firms donated for the *Waltonville,* IL, ag department's new steam cleaner, the FFA members sold corn chips with cheese at ball games to raise money.

N-N-N

In NV, the *Churchill County* Chapter distributed food to folks in the community for Christmas.

N-N-N

Clarkson, NE, distributed phone books in their community. And *Schuyler,* NE, is delivering Meals on Wheels in the area.

N-N-N

Mansfield, TX, Chapter has installed the Chapter Resource System available from the National FFA.

N-N-N

Money raised from sponsoring an invitational wrestling tournament will be used by *Lisbon,* ND, FFA to buy a computer disk for the proficiency awards from the Supply Service.

N-N-N

Lemmon, SD, Chapter hosted a hydraulic workshop in January for members. Instructor was **Tim Kvale,** an FFA Alumni member.

The *Aberdeen,* ID, Chapter participated in National Care and Sharing Day by giving a free soft drink to any high school student who brought canned goods to school. The foodstuffs were given to the local ministerial association for distribution.

N-N-N

Blairs, VA, Chapter also collected canned food—1,330 cans—for their caring project and gave it to the Salvation Army for holiday distribution.

N-N-N

And *Pilot Mountain,* NC, took in 210 cans of food in their project.

N-N-N

Many other chapters sent news about collecting food for the needy in their community or doing some other service, but didn't say it was part of National Care and Sharing Day. Like *Churchill County,* NV, and *Westwood,* AZ, in Mesa.

N-N-N

Shane Garrity, Steve Kuehn, Jim Campbell, Rick Hartmann and **Neal Schoening** were on the winning team in the *DeWitt,* IA, pest hunt. They won $15 and all the pizza and pop they could consume at the pizza party. Wonder how much that cost the chapter?

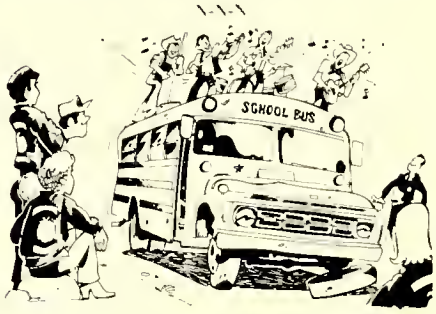
N-N-N

Ronnie Cook won the *Sharon,* TN, Creed contest. Judges were **Brian Ray,** chapter president, **Bobby Morgan,** vice president, **Mark Barner,** secretary, and **Teddy Barthlomew,** advisor.

N-N-N

In the all-school judging contest sponsored by *Verdigree,* NE, Superintendent Robert Jacobs won the teacher division trophy.

N-N-N



Arlee, Flathead, Missoula, Polson and *Stevensville,* MT, traveled to national convention on one bus. When it broke down for four hours in Deer Lodge, everyone enjoyed country music from the *Flathead* Chapter members.

N-N-N

First big activity of the year for the *Silver City,* NM, Chapter is splitting wood for local residents.

N-N-N

Windsor, MO, members joined with other clubs and played in the DECA muscular distrophy volleyball marathon.

Rance Bailey won the *Wirt County,* WV, big buck competition with a 9-point he turned in.

N-N-N

Top selling items at the auction after the FFA pig roast in *Galena,* IL, was two straws of semen which sold for $90. Other auction items donated by local supporters included a Cabbage Patch kid.

N-N-N

Many high school faculty members are pressed into service this time of year to judge or time speaking contests in order to pick local winners. *Wallowa,* OR, remembered to recognize them. Did your chapter?

N-N-N

Members of the *Lowes County,* KY, Chapter distributed 125 fruit baskets to elderly in their community. Total responsibility for the list and distribution was given to the members.

N-N-N

King and Queen of the *Jackson,* MN, High School winterfest were FFA members **Troy Johnson** and **Meg Benda.** They were also members of the state winning livestock team and competed at the national contest.

N-N-N

Seems the proofreader in the local newspaper for *Gaithersburg,* MD, was not a horticulturist. The announcement of the chapter's Christmas tree sale announced "bald" and cut trees available.

N-N-N

The *Devil's Tower,* WY, FFA held a bike-a-thon and raised $675.

N-N-N

FFA Chapter in *Marissa,* IL, were given permission to paint their town's fire hydrants blue and gold.

N-N-N

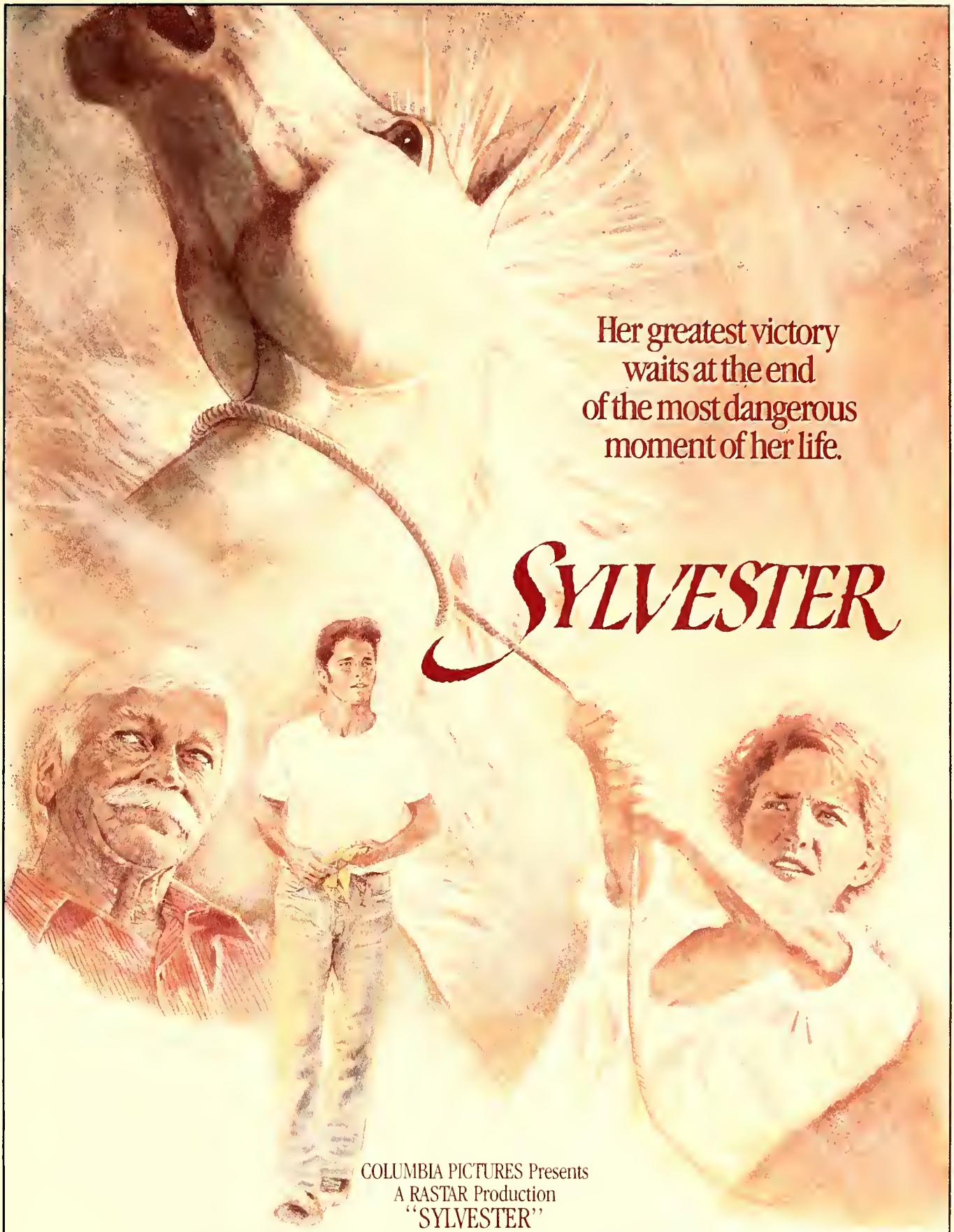
Christmas holiday season for *Housatonic Valley,* FFA, in Falls Village, CT, means wreath and tree business. In '84 they earned $6,800 with their project.

N-N-N

"Blue and Gold Journal" is the new monthly newsletter for the *Glencoe,* OK, FFA.

N-N-N

Don't let up now reporters and officers. Keep the news coming about good meeting ideas, honors received by the chapter, unique service or recreational activities.



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COMING THIS SPRING TO A THEATRE NEAR YOU.

JOBS: How To Get One

Whether you are looking for summer employment or a full-time position, these two weapons will help you land the work you want

By Bernice L. Howell

The Resume

A SHARP, effective resume may make the difference between your being accepted or rejected for a job.

A resume is a summary of your educational, professional and personal qualifications. It is not necessarily a ticket to a job; however, you may not even be considered for some jobs without one. Even worse, you may lose your chances with a resume that is poorly done. Creating a resume—thinking about it, organizing it, and perfecting it—is part of marketing yourself for a job.

Think About It

Before you write a resume, sit down and think about these questions: What kind of job do I want? Why have I chosen this type of position? Where do I want to work? What kind of employee are they looking for? What qualifications do I have? Why should they hire me?

Write out your answers to these questions so you can examine your thinking and make it crystal clear.

Next Step: Organize

Now you can begin to create your resume. The following are categories to include:

Heading. Place your name, address and phone number in an eye-catching format at the top of the page.

Job (or Career) Objective. State your objective clearly, capitalizing on your strengths. Writing a resume without a clear objective is like getting all dressed up and having no place to go.

If you are answering an ad or have access to a job description, you may want your objective to zero in on a specific job. If you are aiming at employment with a particular company or a particular career area, you may want to state your objective broadly enough to not limit yourself to just one job. Samples:

—To contribute my analytical, communication and organizational skills in the finance and accounting aspects of agribusiness.

—A position as farm manager where reliability and excellence in quality of performance are valued.

Education. If you're spending time, money and effort to get a degree in a particular field, your education is probably your most important category. Put it first. List all training, technical as well as college. Start with the present, including name and location of the school, dates attended, and the type of degree you received.

A good selling point is to identify particular courses that relate specifically to your objective. If you have an A or B average, say so. If you worked part time to finance your education and still maintained good grades, include that too. It shows initiative.

Work Experience. Every job you've had should have taught you something you can apply to the next job. (Yes, even your fast-food job!) Your challenge is to relate past experience to the job you are now seeking.

Start with the most recent work experience, state the company, employer and the dates you worked there. Stress what you accomplished, not just your job title. Think about what the employer wants and mesh your qualifications with those requirements. Provide specifics.

In stating your accomplishments, do not start with the word "I." Instead begin with such verbs as: "Designed..." "Managed..." "Developed..." "Trained..." "Was promoted..."

Students who spend their lives on the family farm sometimes feel they have no marketable job experience to list on a resume. They have a wealth of experience many would envy. Start thinking about this category by itemizing your responsibilities, skills and accomplishments that you have accumulated from the farm. Also include all volunteer experience on neighboring farms. Think about projects you have worked on which can help to show the extent of your responsibility, dependability or experience.

Hobbies and Interests and/or Honors and Awards. These categories provide valuable insights to an employer. They show how well-rounded you are. Winning awards shows initiative and desire to excel.

If your objective is to become a farm manager and your hobby has been an FFA project in herd improvement, saying so may show that your career choice is not a fly-by-night idea. Also, interviewers frequently key in on some interest of yours as an "ice breaker" to get the interview rolling.

That sums up the most important parts of a resume. The following tip sheet will help fill in any gaps:

Do keep your resume to just one page. If it's too long, it may not get read.

Don't include references on your resume unless you need to fill space or feel you have a particular advantage in listing them.

Otherwise, have at least three references available who can vouch for your character, academic performance and work record.

Don't include personal details such as height, weight, health, etc. If you need to fill space, put them at the end.

Do write a letter to accompany your resume. This cover letter introduces you and shows that you understand what the job entails. Remember, what you want from this letter and resume is an interview. Be sure to request one in your final paragraph. Provide a phone number.

Do write your resume on crisp, good quality bond paper. Include one-inch margins on all sides, and your categories should be clearly marked by spaces, underlining, or bold headings. If you are not a good typist, consider having a professional typist do your final draft for you.

Don't allow any errors in punctuation or spelling. Proofread your resume several times. •••

The Job Interview

MOST companies use the interview as a selection tool in hiring job candidates. Interestingly, however, the person hired is not always the best candidate but the one who knew the most about how to get hired.

Before The Interview. The key to a successful interview is preparation. You must know yourself and know what you want. Don't assume you can answer any questions on these two aspects without doing some homework. One way to prepare is to "role play" an interview. Have a friend ask you

questions like those following, and practice until you can answer convincingly:

1. Why have you chosen this line of work?
2. Tell me about yourself.
3. Why are you interested in joining our company?
4. What have you learned from some of the jobs you have had?
5. What qualifications do you have that make you feel you'll be successful here?
6. What is your major strength? Weakness?
7. Do you feel you received a good education?
8. What courses did you like best? Least? Why?
9. What have you done that shows initiative and willingness to work?
10. What do you know about our company?

You should also learn as much as you can about the company before the interview: its size, products, services, growth record, management philosophy, promotion possibilities, salary range and reputation. You can do this by talking to people, reading company brochures or looking for information in the library. Jot down questions to ask the interviewer.

What to wear: you make a very clear statement about yourself by your manner and the way you are dressed. Be clean and well-groomed. Choose appropriate, conservative clothing. You wouldn't wear a three-piece suit to go to an interview with a farm manager out in the field. Neither should you go into a business office wearing jeans. Avoid strong perfumes.

Take along pencil and paper in case you need to jot down special information. Take extra copies of your resume, and if you have samples of your work, take them also. Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes early so you don't have to rush.

During The Interview. Though average interviews last about half an hour, much of the outcome will be decided in the first four or five minutes. Be confident and be yourself right from the start. Tell yourself some nervousness is normal, and then forget about it. You're there to convince your interviewer you are the person your resume says you are. And your interviewer is there to find out if you can meet his or her needs.

When you have sat down after the introduction, assume an alert but comfortable position. Put away keys or anything you'd be tempted to fidget with. Rest your hands comfortably in your lap. Be friendly but not too familiar. If you're enthusiastic about the job, show it. If you've done your homework, you should be able to answer most questions briskly— an important part of the art of persuasion. Maintain good eye contact and listen well.

The person interviewing you wants to find out what you are like, what you've done and what you can do for the company. Since getting along with others is a vital part of most jobs, this person will look closely at your personality. Employers also look for alert, mature people who are willing to work and to help create a profit or accomplish the goals of the company. They're interested in a person who will do an honest day's work, who is able to work without supervision, and who will respect the rights and needs of others.

After The Interview. Just as soon as the interview is over, write down the interviewer's name, any questions you will need to answer, and any important information you need to remember. Don't assume you'll remember this without writing it down, especially if you've interviewed with several companies.

Within a day or so— no longer than a week— send the interviewer (addressed by name) a short thank you note for the interview. Doing so has three advantages for you: it makes your name stand out (since only 10 percent write such a letter); it shows you are courteous; and it gives you another opportunity to provide additional information or reinforce any selling points.

Not all interviews lead to a job, but with each experience you should improve your interviewing skills. If you prepared well and presented your qualifications confidently and pleasantly, and if both you and your interviewer learned what you wanted to know, then you have done your best. One of those interviews is going to pay off. Good luck! •••

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Star Farmers

(Continued from Page 15)

the two major highlights of my vo-ag and FFA career.

Farming: What's Needed

You need tremendous amounts of determination and to work extremely hard at your chosen field in agriculture. But that's only the beginning.

You also need to maintain cash flow at all times through skilled management decisions, while using overall investments to increase overall efficiency. I have also learned the value of quality over quantity.

Over the years I have found that taking advice from older, more seasoned people can be extremely valuable—people like your parents, neighbors and local agribusinessmen. I am sure you will find this advice can save you losses, while helping ensure that you make proper management decisions.

I have worked hard at achieving what I have, and I have not been discouraged by my failures. These have only inspired me to try harder at being the best dairyman I can. You too must accept failure from time to time, keeping in mind that many times in the past, failures have bred tremendous success in people.

My advice to Greenhands is to set goals early in your career. These goals can be both long and short term. You are the only one who knows where you want your life to take you today, tomorrow, next week, next month, next year and the next five years. Jot these goals down, record them and review them from time to time.

I have set my goals by priority, and realistically achieved what I set out to do five years ago. Your future should be planned—that way it will be rewarding and extremely self-satisfying. If you are honest, think positively and are realistic, you will have many, many rewarding experiences. •••

Diversity: Key to Farm Profits

By Mark McKay
St. Paul, Oregon
Western Region Star Farmer

FARMING success has long been a tradition in my family. Our farm has been owned and operated by McKays for over 100 years, and my brother and I hope to continue the tradition.

Agriculture is one of the toughest businesses to survive in today. It is becoming more competitive and is placing greater demand on available resources. To continue to be successful, we have to be efficient producers, using both natural and personal resources to their fullest potential.

Success also means diversification. We don't want to put all our eggs in one basket. Having a broad base of crops improves our stability as well as allowing us to make the most efficient use of our equipment and land. A farming education is an ongoing experience in which you can never stop learning.

For myself, success has been a cooperative effort. A lot of what I have accomplished is the result of the efforts of several people, including my father and mother, my brother Dean and my ag teachers over the years.

The FFA has been vital in helping me gain the skills needed to succeed. It has helped teach me the value of organization and perseverance. A person needs a goal and then a plan to reach that goal. Organization, records and plans help to keep me on track.

Nothing worthwhile comes easily, and this is where perseverance comes in. It has taken over seven years to reach one of my goals—the American Farmer Key—and it was not entirely easy. You just have to stick to the task at hand.

I was a late starter in FFA. As a freshman, I was a member but not very motivated. As a sophomore, I began to learn about the competition, leadership and awards FFA offers. It was then that I began to set goals and put some direction into what I was doing.

My advice to younger members is to set a goal in your area of interest and to not bite off more than you can chew. Agriculture is a hard life. It can only be rewarding if you enjoy what you are doing. You have to want to go to work. you can't be forced by someone else to be successful. Start small, get some experience, enjoy some success—then grow into a larger project. •••

A Family Dairy Tradition

By Steve Rogers
Speedwell, Tennessee
Southern Region Star Farmer

I AM 21 years old, and from Day One I have been exposed to the business and lifestyle of dairy farming. There was never a question in my mind as to what I would be doing upon graduation from high school.

It has been tradition in the Rogers family to give all children a cow at a very early age. I took this cow and raised calves, bought, sold and traded until I built up a good sized herd by my junior year in high school.

I live on a 1,500-acre dairy farm with my parents. My dad knew I wanted to own some land of my own, so he gave me an opportunity. I earned money by raising tobacco on some of his land. This, plus income from selling cattle and through the generosity of good neighbors and a super great uncle, was enough to acquire some land that joined my father's acreage. The neighbors and my uncle retired and sold me their farms with no money down and payments low enough for me to handle even at my age.

During my junior year I went to Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) to see if they could help me get started in the dairy business. I was only 17 years old, so the first thing I had to do was petition the courts to have my status as a minor removed, to borrow money before age 18. I had to have a lawyer draw up the papers. My parents and I went before the Chancellor in our county and he had to rule on the matter. With this accomplished, I was off and running.

I built a double four herringbone dairy set-up with a liquid manure system. It is a very efficient and labor-saving operation. I do all the work myself and enjoy every minute of it. I first started milking as a high school senior in February, 1981, getting up before five a.m. and milking before school and coming home right after school to milk. I gave up playing on the basketball team in order to have time for my dairy.

I have learned that farming is a never-ending learning experience. There is as much or more in the management of your time and finances as in the physical work that is involved. Sure, the future is uncertain for farming, but so is everything else. We are not promised a bed of roses in anything we do.

Since farming has been my entire life, I knew FFA would be also. I remember watching as the dairy judging team from our local chapter came to our farm to practice. I just couldn't wait until I was in high school and it would be my turn.

Because of FFA, I have been able to travel across this nation and to many foreign countries. I was a member of the first place Dairy Judging Team in Kansas City in 1979. My team won a 21-day all-expense paid trip to Europe to compete in the World Dairy Judging Competition in Edinburg, Scotland.

Winning this gold medal in Kansas City and being named Star Farmer of the southern region have been the biggest highlights of all that has happened to me through FFA. Greenhands take heart—I am from a small rural community and a very small school, yet I was able to get to Kansas City as a big winner two different times. So anything is possible if you set your goals high enough.

Now it is time for me to move on and make room for another Greenhand who is just beginning an exciting career in the FFA. In doing so I feel I cannot adequately express my appreciation for all the assistance and encouragement from people who have helped me along the way. I also feel that my parents deserve a special thanks. They have put 21 years into this, so I feel every award and plaque and step up the ladder is all to their credit. My next step, hopefully, will be having a son and starting this whole process all over again. •••

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. . . with these exciting FFA sportwear items.

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Sizes: S M L XL.
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JOGGING SHORTS
Navy color with white trim, 50% cotton and 50% polyester with full elastic waist and notched sides for comfort. FFA initials along side stripes. Sizes: S M L XL.
Item JS, Jogging Shorts **each $6.50**

BLUE HEATHER T-SHIRT
Made of 50% polyester and 38% cotton and 12% rayon, this shirt comes as shown, with or without chapter name. Chapter name is lettered under emblem in small block letters if desired. *Minimum order of 1 dozen with chapter name.* Sizes: S M L XL.
Item 303, Heather T-Shirt (without chapter name) **each $5.25**
Item 303, Heather T-Shirt (with chapter name) **each $4.85**

WHITE T-SHIRT
This white T-shirt is 50% polyester and 50% cotton with the standard design, full front as shown. Sizes: S M L XL. *Chapter name is available on orders of 12 or more.*
Item 300, White T-Shirt (without chapter name) **each $4.50**
Item 300, White T-Shirt (with chapter name) **each $4.25**

PLEBE T-SHIRT
Available with, (*minimum order 12*), or without your chapter name under the emblem, this shirt is made of 50% cotton and 50% polyester. Sizes: S M L XL
Item 304, Plebe T-Shirt (without chapter name) **each $5.00**
Item 304, Plebe T-Shirt (with chapter name) **each $4.75**

Item CAP-1

Item CAP-3

FFA CAPS
One size fits all, **CAP-1,** has blue/white nylon, solid panel front, mesh back, **CAP-3,** is denim. **Each is $3.75**

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$100.01 to $200.00	add	$3.25 per order

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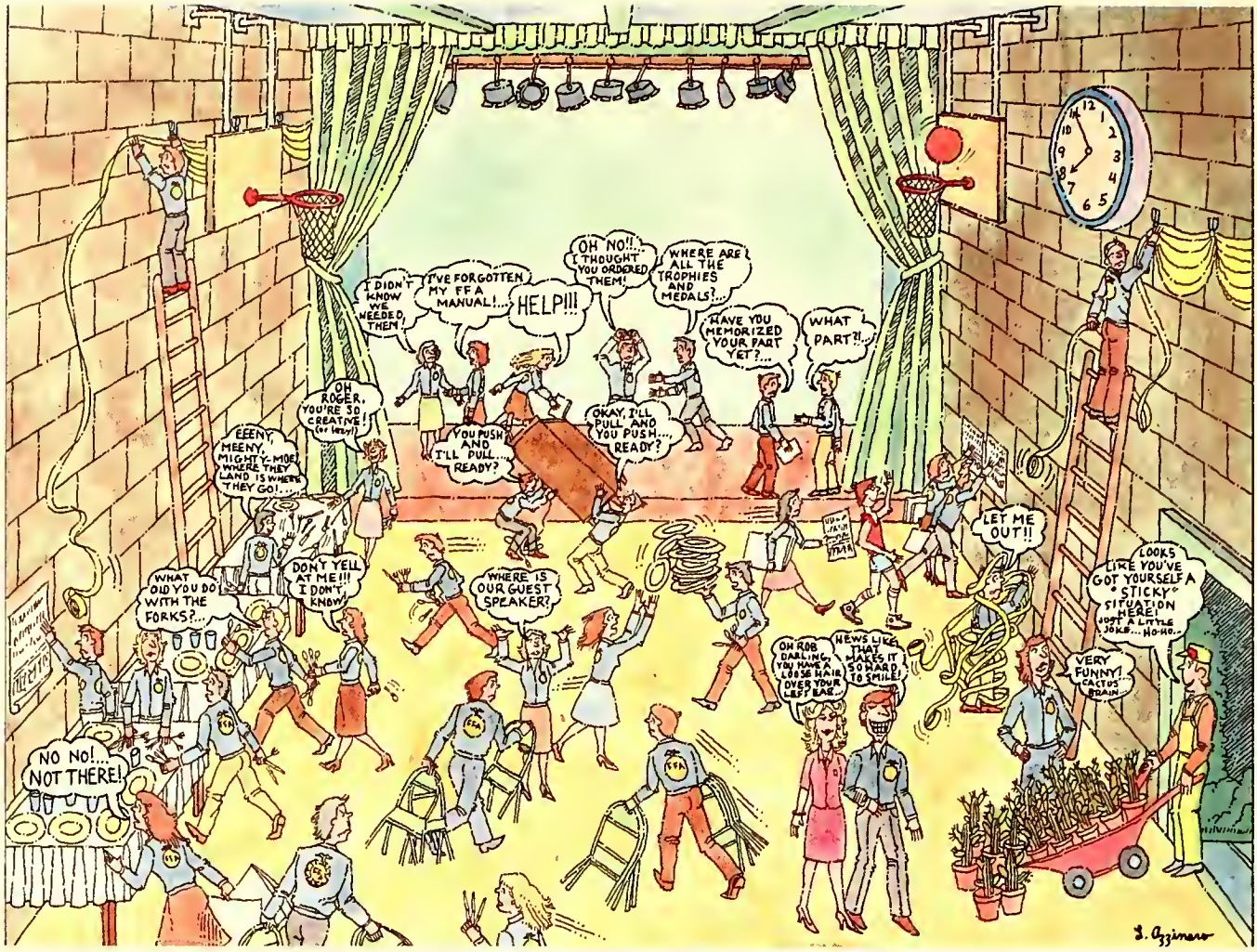

I DIDN'T KNOW WE NEEDED THEM!
I'VE FORGOTTEN MY FFA MANUAL!...
HELP!!!
OH NO!! I THOUGHT YOU ORDERED THEM!
WHERE ARE ALL THE TROPHIES AND MEDALS?...
HAVE YOU MEMORIZED YOUR PART YET?...
WHAT PART?!...
OH ROGER, YOU'RE SO CREATIVE! (or lazy!)
EENY, MEENY, MINEY, MOE! WHERE THEY LAND IS WHERE THEY GO!...
YOU PUSH AND I'LL PULL... READY?
OKAY, I'LL PULL AND YOU PUSH... READY?
LET ME OUT!!
LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A "STICKY" SITUATION HERE! (just a little joke... ho-ho..)
WHAT DID YOU DO WITH THE FORKS?...
DON'T YELL AT ME!!! I DON'T KNOW!
WHERE IS OUR GUEST SPEAKER?
OH ROB DARLING, YOU HAVE A LOOSE HAIR OVER YOUR LEFT EAR...
HEWS LIKE THAT MAKES IT SO HARD TO SMILE!
VERY FUNNY! CACTUS BRAIN
NO NO!... NOT THERE!
L. Azzinaro

Fiction by Shirley Jones

A Night At The FFA Banquet

Our friend Alex Curtright finds herself in some pretty nerve-wracking situations at her chapter's annual outing

THE first inkling that all was not right had come at 6 p.m.

As I walked through the gymnasium, 40 FFA members raced about slamming posters on the walls and throwing silverware on the tables. Two tiny Greenhands struggled to heave a giant lectern onto the stage. To top it off, a Friendly's Nursery deliveryman was depositing a mountain of cacti at the door. "Here's your order of 150 spiny-toed amarylis," the driver had announced cheerfully as he backed out the door.

I stared, open-mouthed, at the heap of quivering needles. Why, I wondered, was our FFA banquet beginning to resemble a botanical garden? Wonder no longer, I thought, as the answer came strolling in the door, wearing the homecoming queen on his arm. Rob England. Chapter president. Orderer of cacti.

Before we go further, I guess a bit of explanation is in order. My name is Alexandra Curtright, but most of my

friends just call me Alex. I am vice president of the FFA chapter in my school, banquet chairman and bearer of many burdens, one of which is Rob England.

Rob and I both ran for president last fall. He has Robert Redford teeth and with strong election support from the athletic coalition, beat me by two votes. At the moment of his election, he decided to adopt the "cool breeze" leadership method—show up for the pictures and let Alex do all the work.

This, however, was too much. It was two hours until our banquet. Rob looked bound for the Tasty Freeze and I had 150 spiny toes instead of Assorted Potted Plants and long-stemmed red roses for our mothers.

"What," I said, "are these?"

"Oh," said Rob, "the nursery was out of roses so I got what they had on hand."

"And why did they run out of roses?" I queried.

"So I ordered them a little late," said Rob. "You are a typical female, Alex. What are you griping about?"

"What am I griping about?" I shouted. We were starting to attract a crowd. I was just getting warmed up. "You've only had eight weeks to do this one small task. If you weren't so busy combing your hair, you would have had plenty of time."

My side was cheering by now, but I realized fighting would get us nowhere. I bit my tongue and went to give the lectern-heavers a hand. This was unbearable. My first banquet as an officer and I was sure it would be a disaster.

I was right. I sat at my station, and, feeling like a piece of wilted lettuce, watched all my weeks of careful planning slide down the drain.

As chairman, I had decided to delegate almost every task at the banquet. Nobody would learn anything if I did it all, I reasoned. Rob would serve as emcee and order the flowers. The secretary would invite the speaker. The treasurer would order the awards. The Greenhands would set up and the sophomores would clean afterwards. It had seemed so easy.

Until the banquet began, that is. At that point, Rob noticed he had no welcome speech. Being a laidback type, he decided to wing it and ended up saying, "We're glad you're here. Let's eat."

The speaker's seat was empty, and Billy, our secretary, hung around the doors, wringing his hands. The ham was cold and the beans were limp since the cooks had thought the meal was to be served at 7:30 and dished everything up 30 minutes early.

Despite a last minute phone call to the FFA Center, our plaques didn't get there on time, and our beaming award winners went home empty handed.

That's not so bad, you say? Well, it gets worse.

When the speaker, our state president, finally rolled in, it was because she had been sent no directions and had to guess where the school was. When Billy stood up to introduce her, he forgot her name. The tables were too close together and one of our honorary members had to wrestle an entire row of chairs to make it to the stage. When he finally got there, Rob welcomed him to membership with the fifth paragraph of the creed instead of the honorary induction ceremony. As I stood there with the officers I felt a bright red glow spreading over my face and neck. What must everyone think, I complained to myself, as I looked at the crowd.

We all stayed that night to clean up, a subdued group of kids throwing paper into trashbags and ripping posters off walls. We had done badly, and all of us knew it. Even Rob had lost his confident stride.

But while they were all moping, I was growing more angry by the minute. There was no reason for such a poor performance. We were better than that. Everybody was just unprepared. If *They* had done their jobs right, we could have had a great banquet.

Suddenly I heard laughter. Billy, recovered from his brush with amnesia, was balancing a stuffed owl on his head. That was all I needed. My fury came pouring out.

"Very funny," I said. "Almost as funny as your speech tonight." I saw his face fall, but I couldn't stop. "Maybe next time you can tap dance on the tables to *Hail the FFA*."

"Aw, let up, Alex," said a voice from behind me. "He didn't do so badly."

"You!" I whipped around, "are a fine one to talk. 'Let's eat' indeed. And the wrong ceremony. I was so embarrassed. You aren't fit to be president."

Silence fell on the gym and Rob stared straight at me. "Is that so?" he said in a strange, quiet voice.

"Very funny," I said.
"Almost as funny as your speech tonight."
I saw his face fall, but I couldn't stop.
"Maybe next time
you can tap dance on the tables to
Hail the FFA."

"Maybe not, but I'm trying," he said and turned to walk away. He hesitated and spoke again.

"Perhaps when you're counting tonight's mistakes, you'll remember your own. If you don't think you made any, let me refresh your memory. You told Billy to get the speaker. Did you offer to help? Tell him how to do it? And Mary Louise and the awards. How was she supposed to know she had to get the order in four weeks early unless you told her. And me. I've never been an emcee before and I've been busy doing fifty other things. I know you think you're the only one who does any work around here, but the rest of us have duties, too, you know."

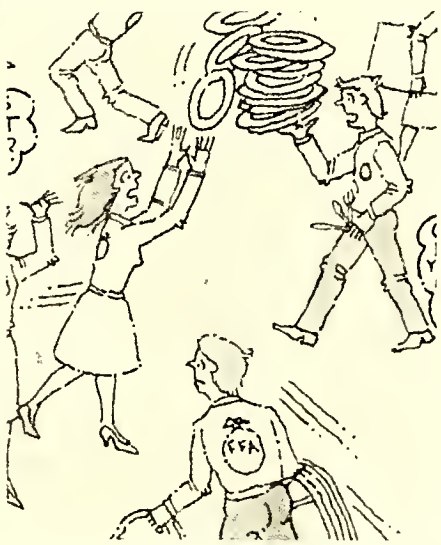
He had me. I had no right to be mad at them and not be mad at myself, too. I realized I hadn't done everything I could have done to make the banquet a success.

I looked at Rob England and, in spite of myself, I smiled. Beneath the letter jacket was a heart and somewhere beneath the hair was a brain.

"I knew it," Rob said. "You're not so tough after all."

Like a huge tree that's been hit with an axe, a little niche was chipped away at the wall between us that night. Things still weren't perfect, but it was a start.

We both picked up a cactus and walked out the door. •••



FFA in Action

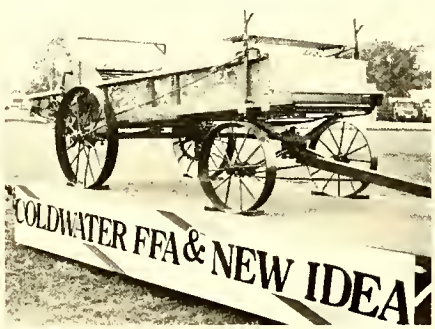
A NEW IDEA IN THE HALL OF FAME

It all started last spring as an FFA project in Coldwater, Ohio. The FFA Chapter decided to recondition an early 1900s vintage originial New Idea manure spreader for use in local parades.

"When we finished, it just looked too nice to let sit around," says Advisor Dennis Riethman. "So we decided to find a home for it where as many people as possible could enjoy this slice of American agricultural history. So that's when we voted to donate the old spreader to the Agricultural Hall of Fame in Bonner Springs, Kansas."

New Idea invented the first successful manure spreader in 1899 and still manufactures them today in their Coldwater facility. In addition the company makes planting, self-propelled harvesting and hay and forage equipment.

The reconditioned spreader is an appropriate addition to the Hall of Fame where exhibits include early steam engines, plows, planters and the first farm truck as well as early hand tools.



The vintage piece of equipment mostly needed new wooden parts before it could be displayed.

The Ag Hall of Fame, located 15 miles west of Kansas City, was chartered in 1960 as a non-profit, educational institution as a memorial to agriculture. The museum of farming is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Hundreds of chapters stop there each year on their way to the National FFA Convention.

The restored spreader was delivered to the Hall of Fame in Kansas. Left to right are members Luke Timmerman, Steve Muhlenkamp and Bert Bertke; Advisor Riethman; New Idea marketing representative Tom Kinzenbaw; and Hall of Fame Director Harold Adkins.

According to Steve Muhlenkamp, chapter president, "It seemed like a monumental task to recondition the spreader. But with a little help from some veteran New Idea spreader makers, the old machine was soon reconditioned. We were surprised to see what great shape many of the parts were still in."

The chapter put in over 400 hours and used the original metal, only replacing the wooden portions of the spreader. •••

HELPING HORSEMEN

Cindy Graf, a member of the Fall Mountain Chapter in Langdon, New Hampshire, was taking care of a new horse and was kicked in the ribs. Her spleen was damaged and emergency surgery was needed that same night.

Since she had just begun a horse boarding and show horse business called Newborn Stable, the chapter went to Cindy's farm and performed a number of chores for her. We cleaned stalls, split firewood, groomed horses and hauled sawdust. Besides helping Cindy do chores, we all had a chance to work together. *(Molly Britton, Reporter)* •••

NATIONAL OFFICER ACTION UPDATE

Since their election in November, the National Officers have already done a lot of traveling.

Soon after their election in the fall, they each were sent to a different state for a week-long experience with state officers, visiting chapters, making TV appearances, speaking at school assemblies and meeting with vo-ag professionals.

Then they spent time in training at the National FFA Center as well as preparing themselves for the January Board of Directors' meeting.

On February 6 they left for a two-week international travel experience in the Orient. They spent eight days in Japan, three days in Hong Kong and one day in the People's Republic of China.

This tour was sponsored by Mitsui & Company (USA), of Memphis and by Mitsui & Co., Ltd. of Tokyo. This is the sixth year they have sponsored an international tour for the FFA officers through the National FFA Foundation.

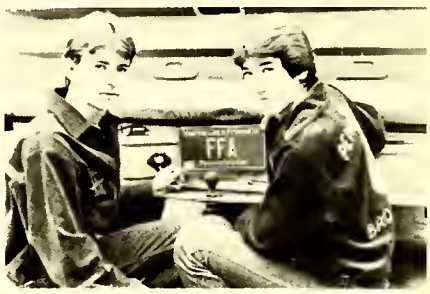
In Japan the officers visited the Future Farmers of Japan, stayed with a Japanese host family and toured Mitsui facilities in that country.

The group was accompanied by Lennie Gamage, manager of international activities at FFA, and Glenn Luedke, director of advertising for *The National FUTURE FARMER.*

After their return, the officer team was sent on a tour of agricultural business and industry in the United States. They left from Kansas City to visit 21 cities in 10 states.

The officers will be accompanied by the Star Farmer of America Larry Nielson of South Dakota, and the Star Agribusinessman of America Rex Wichert of Oklahoma. •••

A COMPLETE SENTENCE



The Brockway, Pennsylvania, Chapter advisor has a unique license plate. By adding the letters FFA instead of the usual number or letter combination, the message is a great promotion for the FFA. President Joe Gryzbek and Vice President Mike Corradi installed the plate. *(Pete Gryzbek, Reporter)*

A TREE FOR A TEACHER

Keil, Wisconsin, is a rural community of about 3,000 located 50 miles south of Green Bay and 17 miles west of Lake Michigan. About 80 percent of all farm income is from dairy herds. The land is rolling and made up of clay soils. Sheet and wind erosion are prevalent, so soil conservation practices are a must in order to preserve the productivity of the land. Tree planting is an integral part of the total soil conservation program of this area.

In 1948, Leonard Forester, a Kiel FFA member, with the cooperation of his parents and the Soil Conservation Service, installed contour strips on his parent's farm – the first such practice for the school district.

The same year, another member, Daniel Kuester, with help of the entire membership planted 1,000 white pine seedlings on his parents' farm. Since that humble beginning, the FFA has been instrumental in planting over a million trees in the area. Tree planting has been a source of income for some of the chapter's other programs. A charge of 1 cent for each tree was charged in the early years. Then in 1975, it went up to 2 cents.

In those early years, the money earned from tree planting was used to finance a pure bred calf program. This was continued until the middle 1970s when the price of calves got too high. Then the chapter used the monies to send two delegates to the national convention.

In 1976, for the bicentennial, the members suggested planting a tree in honor of all the former teachers and administrators that retired from teaching or passed away while employed by the Kiel school district. Five-foot trees were chosen from vo-ag student's farms, dug out and planted on the high school grounds.

Every effort was made to make sure every teacher that qualified for a tree was identified. FFA officers researched the tenure of all teachers going as far back as 1858 when the first school in the district was founded. They went through school records, city records and contacted senior citizens. They found 24 teachers qualfied for a memorial tree.

Former advisor Kramer and Kevin Meyer and Glen Karstaedt dig out one of the oaks to be used for the first memorial tree.

Karen Eckhardt, Brian Kornetzke and Gerald Scharenbroch placed this completed cement block at the base of one of the first 24 trees.

Since that beginning, the project has been an on-going one. This past spring the chapter recognized retiring guidance counselor Merlyn Duerst by placing a tree, with its bronze plaque mounted in cement at the base, on the school grounds. The plaques include the name, years of service, an FFA emblem and the name of the chapter.

Much of the credit for the implementaton of the program goes to Ralph A. Kramer, vo-ag instructor at Kiel for over 35 years. His retirement last year made him also a recipient of a plaque and memorial tree. Benefits of the program include student appreciation for teachers, a great community service program and a valued recognition by teachers to having a lasting memorial in their name at the school. •••

(Continued on Page 44)

Keith Klessig is placing one of the engraved plaques in a wet cement block to go at the base of one of the trees for a teacher.

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FFA in Action

(Pick up ACTION from Page 43)

BEGINNER'S LUCK

One cold Saturday afternoon, December 1, our chapter entered its first float in the Christmas parade in Charles Town, West Virginia, to open the Christmas shopping season.

The theme of the parade was "Christmas Dreams" and our float's title was "Santa Always Dreamed of Being A Farmer." It had a snowy white foundation and a decorated Christmas tree. There was an antique plow and harness all hitched up to a firewood reindeer.

Two members carried an FFA flag in front of the truck which carried the participating members and pulled the float. It was an interesting and fun experience which we all enjoyed and are proud of. *(Ken Coffman, Reporter)* •••

SANTA'S FARM

FFA in Kingwood, Texas, invited their townsfolk to tour Santa's Farm December 21.

The chapter made arrangements with a nearby church to use its parking lot as a hayride pick up and drop off point. The hayride took community residents down to the ag barn and facilities. On the hayride, Santa Claus entertained the children while his elves led the group in singing carols.

Once at the ag barn, everyone was welcome to stop by the feed store for cocoa, coffee and cookies. Then parents and children could visit a living nativity scene beneath the manger constructed of palms.

Chapter members depicted the characters at the scene and the children could see and pet the lambs, pigs, calves and rabbits in the scene. *(Mindy Gardner, Reporter)* •••

DEGREES AND DESSERTS

The Rainier, Oregon, Chapter had their second annual fall dessert to install Greenhand and Chapter Farmer degree recipients.

After opening ceremonies, the guests were shown a special movie, "Solo," about a mountain climber who set many goals as he climbed the snow-capped mountain. It related the evening's events of goal setting in the FFA.

Following the ceremonies of installing the degrees, the Greenhands were initiated and had their hands painted green (to be worn to school the following Monday).

After the initiation, it was time for the main event to dig into the pies brought by each family.

FAIR IMPROVEMENTS

The Oseeola, Missouri, FFA decided the town had gone long enough without a fairgrounds. As a result of their BOAC research, the chapter went to work on it.

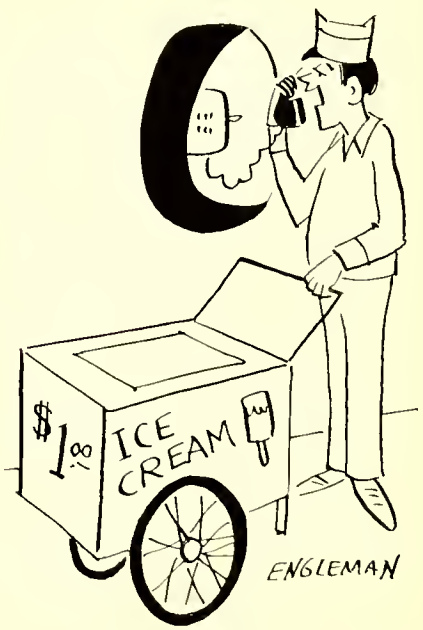
In the past three years, the Osceola FFA has been responsibile for contributing over $2,000 to the fairgrounds as well as many hours of labor. Members have built two enclosed buildings, a livestock barn, renovated a tent, put up a sign and fixed a wash rack. They also clean up the fairgrounds before and after the fair.

The new fairgrounds took shape after the chapter took on the improvement project for their community.

The Sac-Osage Youth Fair is open to youth in two counties which includes five FFA chapters and 20 4-H Clubs. The chapter received three grants from the Missouri Department of Agriculture to use on their BOAC project. They also earned the Governor's Citation twice in recent years. *(Donna Wheeler, Secretary)* •••

PIGS ARE A LONG SHOT

A popular publicity project of the Denison, Iowa, Chapter is their swine



"I got myself a real cool summer job . . !"

olympics. It is a series of obstacle races featuring pigs that have been trained to perform. The races are run at local public events and always attract a big crowd.

The pigs were taught to follow a specific course—out the shoot, through a maze and finally through a barrel—in order to get a reward of food. Bridgette Riley was the chief trainer for the chapter's project since she lived closest to the chapter operation.

Bridgette says, "You have to do some hollering, but not hurt the pigs. They have to know you're not going to hurt them. They only get fed if they go through the course one obstacle at a time." The first one over the finish line got an apple.

For the races some of the pigs were given names like Pork Chop, Cheeks, The Boss and Theador.*(Angie Vissen, Reporter)* •••

KENTUCKY MOLASSES MAKERS

In Cadiz, Kentucky, the Trigg County Chapter has a unique project each year. Along with selling fruit, raising tobacco and many other typical local activities, the chapter raises sorghum and makes molasses.

When the weather warms up to 60 or 70 degrees, the chapter prepares the soil and plants the seeds using a corn planter. The seeds are planted one to two inches deep and four to six inches apart. The rows should be 40 inches apart.

Sorghum, when mature, stands 10 to 14 feet high and looks like corn until maturity. At that point it forms seed pods which will turn reddish brown when ready to harvest.

While the plant is still in the field, the leaves are removed by knocking them off by hand or with a stick. The next step is to top the plant by twisting off the top portion of the plant. After these two steps the stalk is cut and laid in piles for transportation to the processing mill.

The most experience is needed in knowing when to stop boiling the juice in the copper pans. The cooking attracts large crowds to watch the bubbling brew over the open fire pit.

For the FFA, it is at this point that the FFA turns the sorghum project into a demonstration at a local fair. They strip the excess leaves off the cane and then put it into the mill. The old mill consists of two metal rollers which crush the cane. It is powered by draft horses owned by Mr. Herman Litchfield.

The horses are hooked to a wooden sweep which turns the two metal rollers. While the long sweep turns the mill and sorghum stalks are fed into the mill, juice is squeezed out and passes into a special canister.

The sorghum stalks go through the horse powered crusher to get juice to boil into molasses. Members feed the stalks of sorghum into the crusher while other members lead the horse around the circle. Most viewers in the crowd are surprised to see a horse power piece of equipment.

The Trigg County members market their sorghum molasses in pint jars and sell it at the fair and in the community. It is a major fund raising option for the chapter.

Next the juice is boiled in the copper sorghum pan, 8-foot by 4-foot. The sorghum maker constantly stirs the juice to prevent scorching and finally cooks the product to the right consistency. When this is done, a plug is removed from the copper pan and the finished product flows into a strainer and then pint jars. These are sold by the chapter. *(Donna Lad, Reporter)* •••

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The Joke Page

When little Joey complained that he was sick one morning, his second-grade teacher sent him to the principal's office. Joey returned with his shoulders thrown back and his stomach protruding in a high curving arch.

"*Why are you walking that way?*" the teacher asked.

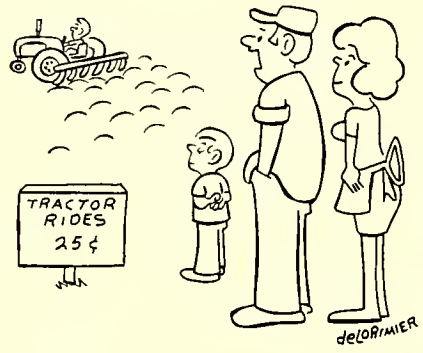
"*I told the principal I had a stomachache,*" Joey explained, "*and he told me to stick it out until noon—then he'd take me home in his car.*"

Bobbie Mae Cooley
Bowen, Illinois

The farmer and his friend were going down the street in the farmer's pickup when they came to a red light and the farmer drove on through. He turned to his friend and said, "*Don't worry, my brother drives like this.*" After going through a couple of more red lights, they came to a green one and the farmer stopped. His friend then asked, "*Why are you stopping, it's green?*"

The farmer replied, "*Yes, but it's red going that way and my brother might be coming.*"

Rob Cottle
Malta, Idaho



"*He'll do anything to get somebody else to do the plowing.*"

Visitor: "*I never saw so many flies. Don't you ever shoo them?*"

Farmer: "*No, ma'am, we let them go barefoot.*"

Jenni Brown
Lawson, Missouri

"*What's the charge against this man?*" said the judge to the police officer.

"*He stole seven cans of soda, your honor.*"

The judge said, "*I can't make a case out of that!*"

Brian Nelson
Hinckley, Minnesota

Did you hear about the cat that ate the ball of yarn? It had mittens.

Phillip Goolsesby
Henegar, Alabama

A young man down on his luck went house to house in a wealthy neighborhood looking for work. Finally a sympathic householder said he'd like to have his porch painted. He told the young man that the paint and brushes were in the garage. An hour later the young man rang the doorbell to collect his pay.

"*Thank you, sir,*" he said. "*By the way, you don't have a Porsche—it's a Ferrari.*"

Jimmy Lee Wilson
Judsonia, Arkansas

My 15-year-old son came bounding in from school and found me in bed.

"*Don't you feel well, Mom?*" he asked with concern.

"*No, I don't,*" I said.

"*Well, don't you worry about dinner,*" he reassured me, "*I'll carry you down to the stove.*"

Renee Richey
Lynn, Arkansas

Q: What kind of linen do gingerbread men sleep on?

A: Cookie sheets.

David Rich
Plympton, Massachusetts

The first man claimed his cow could eat a bale of hay in one day. A second man bet the first man $25 that his cow couldn't eat the bale he had in one day. So, the second man brought out his 1,200-pound round bale (thinking he was pretty sly) and let the first man's cow eat. His cow couldn't eat it in one day, but finished it in two weeks. So the first man paid the second man $25 with a smile and said, "*Thanks, I was paying $50 for the same kind of bale before.*"

Kenneth Muzny
Bryan, Texas

Sign on a church bulletin board: "*Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a good chance to get rid of things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.*"

Marguerite Reasner
Indianapolis, Indiana

A tourist in Florida was admiring an Indian necklace. "*What are those things?*" she asked.

"*Alligator teeth,*" replied the Indian.

"*I suppose they have the same value for your people as pearls do for us,*" she said.

"*Not quite,*" he answered gravely. "*Anybody can open an oyster.*"

Dean Walker
Rush City, Minnesota

Charlie, the Greenhand

"*Ah, yes—the young man in the third row with the bubble gum!*"

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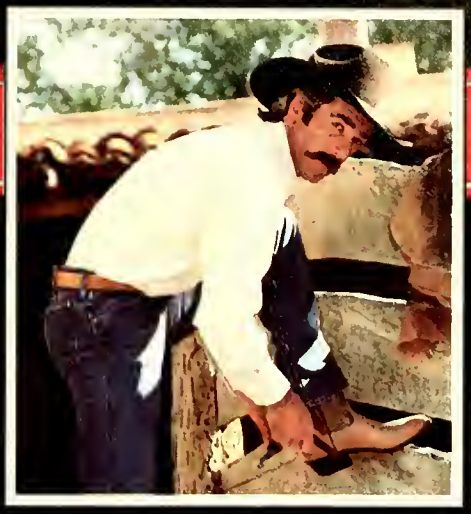
As American...



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